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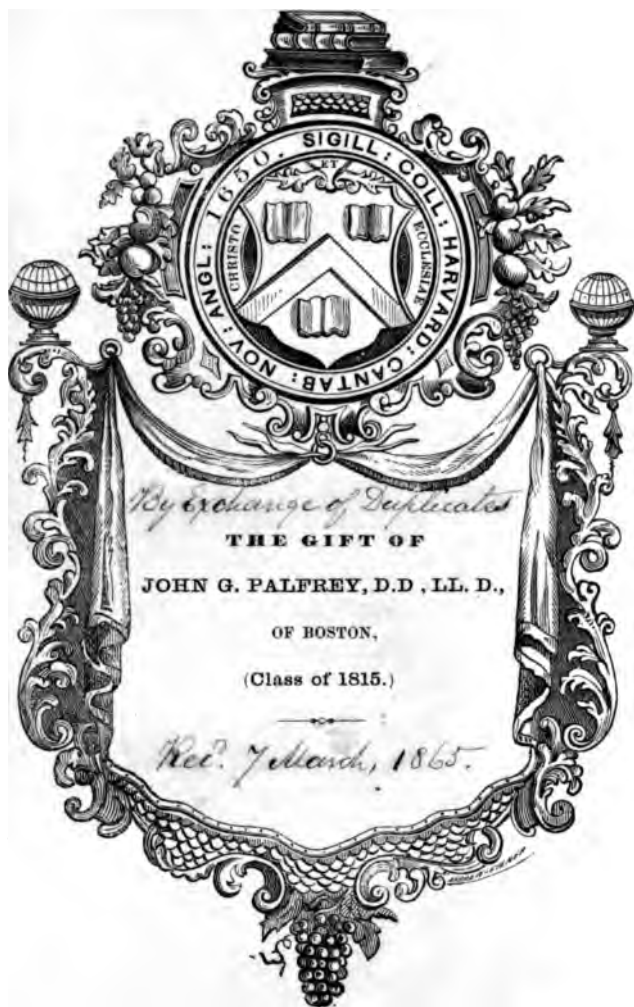
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NOTES FROM NINEVEH.

NOTES FROM NINEVEH.



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NOTES FROM NINEVEH,

AND TRAVELS IN

MESOPOTAMIA, ASSYRIA, AND SYRIA;

BY

THE REV. J. P. FLETCHER.

.. Thy shepherds slumber, O King of Assyria: thy nobles shall dwell in the dust; thy people is scattered upon the mountains; and no man gathereth them."

NAHUM iii. 18.



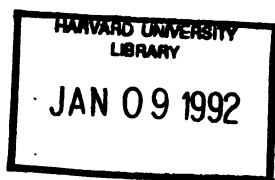
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P R E F A C E.

FROM the great interest excited respecting Nineveh, I have been induced to collect, and throw into a narrative, the notes of two years' residence on its mighty plains, with accounts of excursions into the remotest parts of Assyria. In order to complete the record of my travels, I have added some chapters descriptive of the countries on the route.

The hypothesis respecting the difference between the Babel mentioned in Genesis and that alluded to in the later inspired writers is, I believe, entirely new; as are, also, most of the remarks on Assyrian history. Those which relate to the true position of the Ararat of Scripture, I found, after my return, had suggested themselves to Bochart and others; but I am not aware that they have appeared before in an English dress.

The history of the Nestorians and Jacobites, as well as the account of the massacre of the former by the ferocious and savage Kurds, proceeds from my desire to excite, on behalf of the Christians of the East, a spirit of kindly sympathy among their brethren in England.

The remarks on antiquities have been somewhat abridged, in consequence of the ground being in great measure pre-occupied by Mr. Layard.

Before I conclude, I must acknowledge my grateful obligations to the living and the dead. Among the latter, I would particularize especially Herodotus and Joseph Simon Assemani. The former I have always found the most vera-

cious, as well as the most simple and unaffected of writers; while the pages of the last-named contain an almost inexhaustible fund of information respecting the churches of the East, and other matters connected with Oriental history. Gibbon, who terms him "the learned and modest slave," might have added with truth the title of impartial to his other epithets.

Among the living, I must number Samuel Birch, Esq., from whose valuable observations on the Karnak Tablet I have derived much useful information. I am also indebted to Mr. James Darling, of the Clerical Library, Lincoln's Inn Fields, for a copious supply of many rare and high-priced works of reference.

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NOTES FROM NINEVEH,

&c. &c.

CHAPTER I.

Departure. Paris. French Oriental works. Mediterranean monks and Methodists. A nondescript. Sicily. A Maltese ecclesiastic. Malta. Nix mangiare stairs.

It was about the middle of February, 1842, when I first received the intimation that I had been appointed the lay associate of a clergyman, who was about to proceed on a mission of inquiry into the present state of religion and literature among the ancient Christian churches of the East. Soon after, my colleague proceeded to Malta, where he had spent the greater part of his early life, leaving me to follow him in the month of May. At that time I left London, and proceeded in the first place to Paris, where I hoped to have the opportunity of consulting two or three works on Oriental matters, which could not so readily be procured in London.

For some time, France has taken a lively interest in the affairs of Turkey and of the East generally. Most of the Arabic and Turkish grammars and dictionaries are written in French, and we have in English scarcely any elementary work relating to either of those languages. It is true that we possess grammars of the written or classical Arabic, but they are of little use to one who wishes merely to acquire the vulgar dialects used in common conversation. Until very lately, too, no English steamer was to be found in the Mediterranean, while the innumerable French packets, going hither and thither, seemed to assert the exclusive right of our Gallic

neighbors to what they have been pleased to term a French lake. In Constantinople, and other parts of the Turkish empire, French is more frequently spoken than any other European language, with the exception, perhaps, of Italian, which, from its facility of acquirement, and its being the native tongue of the Roman Catholic missionaries, greatly predominates in Syria and Egypt. The French government, whether monarchical, imperial, or republican, has always fostered and promoted the labors of those men of letters who devote their time to philological pursuits. In England, works of this kind are left, like all others, to the patronage of the public at large, and as the number of those interested in such pursuits will always be small, the linguist cares little to engage in labors which are attended with no profit, and even in many cases with certain loss. Men will always prefer amusement to instruction, or at least they will require that the two be blended together; and thus, the novelist, the historian, or even the writer of travels, may seek for his reward in the favor and the support of an amused and gratified public, while the scientific or philological writer will find that his researches must be, like virtue, their own reward.

After a very pleasant journey through the south of France, I arrived safely at Marseilles, and beheld with varied emotions the vast expanse of the blue Mediterranean extended before me. There, indeed, was that historical sea on whose waves Roman and Carthaginian had contended for the empire of the world. On its fertile shores had once existed the mighty empires of the past. Egypt, the foster-mother of arts and learning; Greece, the parent of poets, philosophers, and heroes; Rome, the impersonation of military power and dominion; Carthage, the busy trader of the old world; and last, though not least, the Holy Land of Palestine, rife with associations connected with the patriarchs and prophets, the apostles and martyrs of our faith. But though ages of warfare and desolation have written on those once mighty shores, Ichabod, the glory has departed, yet the scenic beauty—a beauty rendered, perhaps, more touching from its contrast with decay—has not entirely abandoned them. The works of man's genius are ruined or gone, but the creations of Deity shine as fresh and as fair as when they first rose into existence at the fiat of the Omnipotent. No, the eye may mark with sorrow the wrecks of man created beauty which lay scattered

around ; but the dark blue sea has met with neither alteration nor change, and the bright sky of the south still retains its sunny smile.

And now from the deck of a French steamer I take my last adieu of Europe, and then turn to contemplate my fellow-passengers. They are a motley group. Long-bearded Frenchmen and Italians contrast strangely with the smooth-faced, close-shaven Englishman, while here and there a red cap and blue tassel proclaim its wearer a son of the East. Figures, strange and novel to the eye of an untraveled Briton, present themselves, enveloped in long brown frocks, girt about the waist with the friar's cord. They seem beings of another age, relics of a system known only to us by the pages of history, and the lifelike pictures of the Middle Ages, traced by the pencil of the great Enchanter of the North. Yet whatever he might have been in times past, the monk of the nineteenth century has little of the poetic about him. Take the first Methodist preacher you meet, invest him with a long brown vest and a pair of sandals, and you have the fac-simile of a modern monk. And, perhaps, the comparison may go deeper yet. The same religious enthusiasm, that enthusiasm which feels deeper longings and more intense disgust for the world than animates the ordinary class of religionists, has made alike the monk and the Methodist. But the Church of Rome has cherished and recognized the wild thoughts and irregular acts of enthusiasm, while the Church of England has repelled them from her with cold disdain ; and the result has been, that the one possesses a well-organized body of supporters, who have, in return for the protection which they have received, consented to barter some of the independence of enthusiasm for the almost military regularity and obedience of a monastic rule, while the other has raised up enemies on every side of her, who conspire her destruction, and menace her stability continually. Whether the feeling that drove Wesley and Whitfield from the service of the church into the ranks of dissent, was a healthy and a proper one, I do not pause to inquire. The repentance of the present generation for the mistakes of the past may be genuine and satisfactory, but it can scarcely retrieve the mischief. If it could, the numerous and zealous body of which Wesley was the founder might yet become the bulwark of the Church of England.

We had on board an individual who excited much curiosity, and greater disgust. He was a short, olive-complexioned personage, with a pair of cunning and malicious eyes twinkling intensely with the love of mischief. No one could discover what part of the earth had the honor of giving him birth. The most searching inquiries failed of obtaining satisfaction, and even the curiosity of a guessing American, who set to the task with all the patient pertinacity of his countrymen, was doomed to desist unsatisfied. This mysterious individual had been, according to his own account, in every region of the habitable world. He spoke with equal volubility of the cities of Europe, and the wilds of Africa. He had been in London and at Pekin. He descanted on the mode of traveling in Turkey, and preferred it to the railroads of America. Tripoli and Timbuctoo seemed familiar words. Some doubts existed as to his religion. One or two judged him to be a Mohammedan; others said he was a Greek, an Armenian, or a Jew; while a few who had been occasionally wearied by his questions, or teased by his sarcasms, affirmed that such conduct could proceed from no one but a downright pagan. However, the object of our inquiries deigned, in this latter particular, to satisfy in some measure our curiosity. He had annoyed a worthy priest very much, one day, at the dinner table, by some impertinence, and attempted to appease the padre's displeasure by professing his respect for the sacerdotal order, adding, "for you must know, my father, that I am a good Catholic." The padre looked dubious, but said nothing, though I have no doubt that he thought such an unruly member better out of the church than in it.

But we are passing along the Calabrian coast, having obtained a good external view of Naples and its celebrated volcano, while lying at anchor for a few hours in the bay. We sail by the Lipari, which resemble, somewhat, the tall chimneys of a manufacturing town, and, like them, smoke continually. Messina and Rhegium come on each side of us, and we move peacefully by the once terrible localities of Scylla and Charybdis. We did not fall upon or into either, notwithstanding the well-known line; and, indeed, the rock and the whirlpool, so dreaded of yore, seem to excite little terror in the breasts of modern sailors. Hardly, however, had we passed through the straits of Messina, when we were

visited by a strong breeze, which set all around us in commotion. A veil of mist hid Sicily from our eyes, and the vessel began pitching and rolling to an extent which obliged nearly all the passengers to retire below. An unfortunate wight, who had succeeded with great difficulty in lighting his pipe, by the aid of a short rope, which was suspended from one of the masts, was seen staggering from one side to the other, the sparks flying about in all directions, much to the indignation of an Italian sailor, who imprecated on his unlucky head all the bad wishes with which the Ausonian vocabulary is so replete. I essayed to descend to the cabin, but the moans, and the odor which arose from thence, were too strong for my sympathies, and olfactory nerves; so, wrapping my cloak around me, I passed the night on deck, and awoke the next morning from uneasy slumbers, just in time to see the first dim outline of Malta emerging from the horizon. Matters being upon the whole in a more placid state than on the preceding day, some of the sea-sick crept up the stairs, and were much comforted by the news that we were approaching land.

A Maltese ecclesiastic, who had accompanied us from Naples, saluted me in Italian; but, being ignorant of that language, I endeavored to call up my school recollections of Cicero and Virgil, and addressed him in Latin. He answered me with great volubility, having been accustomed to speak it in the college at Rome where he was educated. I felt disposed to envy his fluency, as I perceived myself getting confused with concords and cases, and had besides an awkward consciousness that my sentences were not very Ciceronian. My friend was completely *Laudator temporis acti*, and did not seem to relish the rule of England. He dwelt complacently on the virtues of the Order of St. John, and hinted a wish to see their dynasty restored. He complained that the English had no religion, and, in the same breath, lamented their proselyting propensities. I pointed out to the worthy padre the slight inconsistency of these two statements; but he maintained his ground in more voluble Latin than I could command, and certainly he managed to have the last word. Like many of his countrymen, he could not admit that any one rejecting the authority of the Pope was a Christian; and he asked me triumphantly, whether a nation could have much sense of piety, that, with such

wealth and influence at its command, was content to provide only a miserable room, that had formerly been the kitchen or wine cellar of the Grand Master, for the service of the English Church.* Our discourse was drawn to a close by the entry of our vessel into the bay, and as all were eager to descend into the boats, it was impossible to debate the question any farther.

Landing on the quay, we found ourselves surrounded by a mob of dark-featured islanders, clamoring and shouting, and proclaiming each his own particular virtues in bad Italian, and worse English. After having been tossed and pulled for some moments hither and thither, I succeeded in securing the aid of a guide, with whom I prepared to ascend the celebrated stairs known by the euphonious title of *nix mangiare*. Valetta is built on the top of a rocky promontory or headland, which, jutting out into the sea, divides the two principal harbors from each other. The ingenuity of some knightly engineer contrived to form on each side of this promontory ascents of steps, so that all the lanes leading to the principal thoroughfare are literally streets of stairs. On those which I was ascending, a troop of ragged urchins had taken up their post, and began to solicit my charity, with loud cries of *nix mangiare, nix mangiare*, which they presently translated for my benefit into "not got nothing to eat, not got nothing to eat." A small donation satisfied, or at least quieted, my youthful escort, and a few minutes afterwards, I found myself safely lodged in the temporary dwelling-place of my friend, who welcomed me to Malta with his usual kindness and hospitality.

* That reproach, I am happy to say, has since been rolled away from the English name by the munificence of the late lamented Dowager Queen Adelaide, who erected, at her own cost, a spacious and magnificent church for the use of the English residents at Valetta. Yet about forty years had elapsed, since the period of the occupation of the island by the English, before this act of royal piety put to shame the tardiness and want of public spirit of the English residents at Valetta.

CHAPTER II.

Malta and the Maltese. Valetta. St. John's houses. Auberges. Capucin convent. Carneria. Fatal accident. Fortifications. Calash. Casal Mosta. Cività Vecchia. St. Paul's Bay. Casal Crendi. Macluba. Fungus rock.

EXPERIENCE confirms me more and more in the opinion that the English public commonly know far less of their colonies than they do of other countries. China is distant enough, and yet we have had more written on the manners and customs of the people of Canton or Peking, than we have on the character, language, and antiquities of the most interesting of our Mediterranean colonies.

Since the overland route to India has been established, numbers of travelers visit Malta every month, and the salubrity of its climate has led many medical men to recommend it as a sanatorium for a certain species of complaints. Yet, comparatively few that visit the island feel sufficient interest in its people or its antiquities to deem either worthy of much attention.

The diary of the traveler generally presents a very imperfect view of the interiors of one or two churches; informs us that the Maltese are very brown, barbarous, and superstitious; and then proceeds to describe the festivities of some mess-table, or exclusive English *soirée*.

A young Anglo-Maltese was astonished, during a short visit which he paid to England, to find his friends and relatives perfectly incredulous when he informed them that there were shops in Valetta, and that his coat and pantaloons were actually manufactured by a Maltese tailor. And yet Malta presents no inconsiderable claims to the notice of the studious traveler. It was for some time the residence of St. Paul, it received the last remnant of Christian chivalry, when, driven from Rhodes, they made this rocky isle "Europe's best bulwark 'gainst the Ottomite." It abounds with associations of a poetical and romantic nature. One at least of the islands,

Gozo, is said to have been the enchanted home of Calypso; and Malta itself was colonized, and inhabited by the Phœnicians, Carthaginians, Greeks, Romans, and Saracens, previous to its occupation by the Knights of St. John. Its language excited the interest, and occupied the attention of one of the first linguists in Europe, the late Cardinal Mezzofanti. Its antiquities, though not numerous, are by no means to be despised, and the habits, manners, and even superstitions of its semi-oriental population merit some attention, and more inquiry than the generality of travelers care to bestow. The absurd and silly prejudices of a few English merchants and some self-satisfied military residents have indeed created a gulf between the two races, who, separated by mutual antipathies, care not to mix together in society, and perhaps the chilling repulsiveness of our northern manners accords ill with the warm and excitable temperament of the south; yet, if the traveler can get beyond the exclusive circle which his English friends will fain draw around him, he will see and hear much to stir up his curiosity, and to repay with interest his inquiries. The Maltese are a lively, intelligent, quick-witted, and ingenious race, though, like their Italian neighbors, they are somewhat too fond of *dolce far niente*, and like all southerners prone to push religion to the extreme of superstition. Their ballads betray much genuine feeling, and abound in allusions which show clearly their Eastern origin; while the magnificent churches to be found even in the poorest villages reflect credit on their taste and religious principle. After their knightly masters had deserted their post, the Maltese bravely defended their rights and liberties against the French invaders, and had nearly forced the garrison in Valetta to capitulate, when the English came to their assistance. Yet the Maltese have been reproached with moral degradation and cowardice by men who never knew or cared to know a single native of the island.

The Strada Reale is the grand thoroughfare of Valetta, and towards it we direct our steps. Ascending a lane of stairs, we come to a more natural ascent leading into the square which fronts the old palace of the Grand Master, now occupied by the English governor. This edifice is built in the Italian style, and contains the armory of the knights. You enter the armory, and behold two lines of figures in armor, bearing the red-cross of Malta on their shields. Devices

composed of warlike implements decorate the walls. Here is the suit of De Wignacourt, inlaid with gold; the sword of the famous corsair, Dragut; and a curious cannon, composed of a thin tube of iron, bound round with ropes, and covered with a coat of plaster painted black. Everything looks warlike and ferocious, and you may almost fancy yourself transported to the age of the Crusades. Descending from the armory, we pursue our way to the Collegiate Church of St. John, where the knights were wont to assemble on Sundays, and high festivals. It contains the chapels of the different nations, or languages as they were called, and the tombs of several of the grand masters. The rich variegated pavement of Mosaic marble is formed of tombstones, on each of which the armorial bearings of the deceased are emblazoned. The painted roof is divided into compartments, in which are represented scenes from the history of the order. Behind the high altar is a well-executed group in white marble, representing the baptism of our Saviour. To the right is the chapel of the Holy Sacrament, at the entrance of which are suspended the keys of Acre, Jerusalem, and Rhodes. A superb railing of silver excites your attention, and you are told how it was saved from French rapacity by the ready wit of one of the canons, who covered the precious metal with a thick coat of green paint. You descend to the crypt, and muse over the monuments of departed chivalry, and perhaps wax indignant against the plain, matter-of-fact spirit of the nineteenth century. Yet the men over whose remains you grow sentimental numbered among them the selfish and intriguing, the gross and earthly-minded. Times are changed, but our race changes not, notwithstanding the old assertion—

"Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis."

What man is in the nineteenth century he was in the fifteenth.

The houses of Valetta are built in the Italian style, and have mostly a balcony attached to the first story. In the evening, the people generally ascend to the flat terraced roofs, to enjoy the sea breeze, which meets with double welcome after the sultry and oppressive heats of the days. Malta is frequently visited by the sirocco, a hot burning wind, which completely enervates for the time the whole

frame, and renders it incapable of exertion. From mid-day till three in the afternoon the Maltese close their shops, and enjoy the Italian luxury of a siesta.

The Auberges, formerly the residences of the knights, are still known by the names of the different nations which composed the order. They are buildings of some elegance, but not deserving of any especial notice. Valetta contains many monasteries and nunneries, and the inmates of the former, in their sombre dresses and cowls, may be often met in the streets and in the Botanic Garden, situated without the gates, in the suburb called Floriana.

A small distance from the Botanic Garden is a monastery of Capucins, famous for its Carneria or subterranean chapel, the ornaments of which are composed of the relics of mortality, bones and skulls. When a monk dies, his body is eviscerated, dried on the terraced roof, and then, clothed in the monastic habit, it is placed in a niche in the Carneria. Several of these spectre-like corpses are to be seen, slowly mouldering away before the eyes of the beholder. One of them holds a scroll containing a mournful, but neglected truth, "What thou art, I was; what I am, thou shalt be." It has a strange and mournful interest, that old monastery with its long passages and narrow cells. A ghost-like air pervades the corridors, and makes you feel as though a spectre were airing himself behind you. I am not very nervous, but I detected in my mind a lurking desire to look over my shoulder as the monk who accompanied me related the following tale: One evening, he and several of the inmates had been conversing about the Carneria and its cold and silent dwellers. One after another had told of fearful appearances and strange sounds, disturbing at midnight the quiet of the monastery. In the midst of these legends, a strange desire seized one of the party. He expressed a wish to descend alone with a light into the abode of the dead. The others attempted to dissuade him, but in vain. With an air of bravado, and a smile of contempt for what he termed the superstition of his companions, he burst from them, and they continued, in awe and silence, listening to his retreating footsteps. The door of the Carneria was heard to open, and, for a few moments, no sound was heard as the listeners gazed fearfully at each other. Suddenly, a piercing shriek rang through the passages of the monastery, and hardly had

the echoes ceased, when it was followed by a succession of cries for help. Lights were procured, and the whole convent, with the superior at the head, rushed down to the subterranean chapel. On the steps lay the unfortunate victim of his own temerity, gasping in the agonies of death. A nail in the stairs had caught the hem of his long robe, while ascending to rejoin his companions; and his excited and superstitious fancy had led him to imagine himself in the grasp of the dead. He was carried to his cell, and died the next day. His withered form, clad in monkish attire, now fills one of the niches of the Carneria.

One striking feature about Valetta is the abundance, I may almost say the exuberance, of its fortifications. As you pass out of the gates, you find yourself encompassed by draw-bridges, moats, and other strange-sounding contrivances of defence. The later grand-masters seem to have contended with each other who could build the most, and when all this fortifying had reached the acme of perfection, the town was quietly taken without a blow having been struck in its defence. No shame, however, to the engineers, for Bonaparte candidly acknowledged, after he had gained admission into Valetta, "that it was well for him some one from within had opened the door." How intensely he must have despised the degenerate descendants of the men who fought so bravely at Acre and Rhodes, when he beheld them submitting, one by one, to the degradation of tearing the cross from their breasts, as they passed through the gates which a handful of men might have defended against a host. And now I must ask the reader to mount a calesh and take a drive with me into the country. A calesh is a most original vehicle of its kind; it has two shafts of a singular and primitive construction, protruding from beneath a body resembling somewhat in shape that of a post chaise. As it jolts along the stony roads of the country, you wish in vain that you had trusted to the sagacity of a hired saddle-horse, to find his way over the island, and not have shut yourself up in a box on wheels. The driver runs by the side of the horse, and when weary seats himself on the shafts.

We come now to Casal Mosta, a miserable collection of small houses built in the Oriental style, and displaying, in their plain, unornamented exteriors and latticed windows, a striking contrast to the gay colors and Italian arrangements

of the town habitations. You hear no more the soft, liquid sounds of the sweetest of languages, but in its stead the rough, guttural Maltese, which resembles greatly the Arabic, and is to be considered, if Maltese philologists speak the truth, as the modern form of the ancient Punic or Phœnician. In some parts of the neighboring island of Gozo, the country people speak a dialect termed "Braik," which is said to be a distinct language from the ordinary Maltese.

The Church of Casal Mosta will, when completed, be one of the finest in Europe. The story of its erection is somewhat singular. A young priest, a native of the village of Mosta, happened to say his first mass in the Pantheon at Rome. Struck with its peculiar beauty, he made a vow that he would erect a similar structure in his native village. Years rolled on, and the priest became a comparatively wealthy and prosperous man. He practiced the most rigid economy, and, before he died, succeeded in collecting a large sum, which he bequeathed to trustees for the purpose of erecting the church. Various additions were made to the original fund, and at last, after many delays, the execution of the plan was confided to Mr. Grognet, a Maltese architect of great skill. Mr. Grognet has nearly finished the church, although the work has been much delayed for want of funds; when finished, it will be one of the most beautiful temples in the world.

Cività Vecchia, or the old city, formerly the capital of the island, possesses a splendid cathedral, from the roof of which a most extensive view may be obtained. The catacombs are inferior in size and interest to those of Rome, but their extent is very great; our guides told us that many persons had been lost in endeavoring to explore some of the more intricate passages. On many of the tombs a cross is sculptured, which seems to indicate the resting-place of a Christian. Perhaps the early professors of our faith held their meetings here during seasons of persecution.

A cave containing the statue of St. Paul is pointed out as the abode of the apostle during his residence at Malta. Publius, who is mentioned in the Acts as the chief man of the island, is said to have been the first bishop. Many of the Maltese peasantry can repeat the names of the various chief pastors of the island, from Publius to the present archbishop.

I visited St. Paul's Bay, and was much struck with the strong resemblance which it bears to the place described as the scene of his shipwreck in the Acts. Nothing, in fact, can be plainer than that Malta was the Melita of the sacred historian, and yet men have questioned even this. Our age seems to find great satisfaction in doubting. Perhaps it would be happier if it could believe a little more.

The remains of Casal Crendi did not much interest me. They consist of the outline of a Phœnician or a Carthaginian temple, with several chambers attached. The Punic race has done little for mankind. A nation of traders, they seem to have selfishly confined themselves to their own peculiar objects of traffic and gain. They have had their reward in great national prosperity as long as they continued a nation, and in oblivion ever since. They did not choose to remember the claims of posterity, and posterity has revenged itself by forgetting them.

Not far from Crendi there is a kind of chasm, said to have been formed by the giving way of the roof of a large cavern beneath the surface. It is called Macluba, a word signifying anything inverted, or, to use a common phrase, turned inside out.

On the southern coast of Gozo is a rock which derives its name from the fungus that is found in great abundance on its summit. This rock is almost perpendicular, and is separated from the mainland by a narrow channel of about fifty feet in breadth. The mode of transit adopted is curious, and seems rather precarious. Two stout ropes are extended across the channel in parallel lines, thus connecting the rock to the land. From these slackened ropes, a box of oblong form is suspended by rings, and furnished with a rope attached to the outer end, by which it may be drawn across. A Maltese then gets inside the box, and conveys himself to the rock, where he fastens the end of what I may call the tow line. The box is then sent back to receive the enterprising traveler, who, after submitting meekly to be packed up and disposed of within the smallest possible compass, finds himself gliding swiftly down the slackened ropes till he arrives midway. The man on the rock then pulls him up the ascending ropes and assists him out of his box, which is somewhat needful after the cramping process before alluded to. The traveler then receives a fungus or two as trophies

of his valorous achievement, and not unfrequently finds himself mulcted of a sixpence or more before his guides will allow him to re-enter his box. He then returns to the mainland the same way in which he came, and doubtless congratulates himself that he has escaped with an unbroken neck, though the danger is more in appearance than otherwise.

There are many other of the curiosities of Malta which might, perhaps, deservedly require some notice at my hands. But I feel that the indulgence of my natural inclination to linger a little longer amid scenes where I passed the brightest and happiest hours of my life would lay me open to the just complaint that I was keeping back the reader from more important and interesting matter.

CHAPTER III.

English and foreigners. Dissensions at Malta. The Bishop of Gibraltar. Character of the Maltese. Language. University. The press of Valetta. Religion. Anecdote of a preacher. The priesthood. The canon and the beggar. The knights. Singular species of duel. The hospital. The taking of St. Elmo.

It is a general complaint among traveling Englishmen that our nation is not properly estimated by foreigners. Those, too, for whom we have expended both treasure and blood often seem the least disposed to acknowledge the debt, or to manifest any grateful recollection of it. Yet, to assume ourselves the innocent and blameless victims of unmerited dislike, however consoling it may be to the national vanity of the mass, would hardly satisfy the inquiries of a candid and philosophic mind into the cause of an alienation so generally admitted. The man who is not utterly blinded by national bigotry can hardly read on the walls of the Vatican, and even in St. Peter's itself, reflections in English of the most gross and insulting kind on the Papal government without feeling that some members, at least, of our country and creed have laid themselves and their nation open to suspicion and dislike. The devout Romanist who repairs with

pious veneration to the most sacred of the mysteries of his religion is both scandalized and shocked to behold St. Peter's converted into an opera-house, and some of the most respectable of our countrymen and countrywomen using their *lorgnettes*, talking and laughing, with as much carelessness and indifference as they would display at an opera or a ball. Nor is his respect or love for England and the English much improved when he hears what was actually the case a few years ago, that an English lady has placed her lap-dog on one of those consecrated altars where he believes the presence of God incarnate daily manifests itself. To say that we discredit the doctrine of transubstantiation is but a poor apology for shocking the feelings of those who admit it.

It must be acknowledged, therefore, that improprieties of this kind must have a tendency to create an unfavorable impression concerning us; yet this, I believe, is not the sole cause why we accord so little with our continental neighbors.

We differ *toto cælo* from every other nation on the face of the earth. No one understands our institutions. They are as unintelligible to the mass of continentals as Shakspeare is. Try, for instance, to make a Frenchman understand the precise character of the Church of England, or of the English constitution. He would hardly be able to reconcile the pretensions to Protestantism of the former with her authoritative and dogmatic teaching: he would regard the latter as the uninitiated do a piece of complex and intricate machinery. Our social notions, too, are so peculiar. We can do nothing without asking a man to dinner, and our friendship is consummated, like the covenants of old, by eating. The foreigner will only give you *eau sucrée* and a cigar, and he looks upon invitations to dinner as *monstra horrenda*—as a polite way of picking your neighbor's pocket. At Malta, we have the mutual antagonism of the English and the continental enacted on a small scale.

The English merchants who began to establish themselves at Valetta after 1815, were disposed to look with some contempt on the Maltese baron or marchese who, with the blood of the Testaferratas in his veins, lived on less than the wages of an ill-paid London clerk. And the Maltese gentleman, repaying the pride of purse with the pride of birth, avoided

the society of the foreigner where his claims were not appreciated or his position respected. Religion, too, interfered in the way of union. The sturdy Protestant looked with surprise and contempt on the large wooden images of the saints placed at every street corner, which the devout Maltese saluted as often as he passed by. He was indignant, as a man of business, to encounter daily such crowds of priests, monks, and ecclesiastical idlers, who seemed to have nothing to do but to contemplate and lounge. Moreover, collisions often took place in the streets. The English refused to salute the host when passing in procession, and the mob of Malta endeavored to enforce compliance. Disturbances often occurred on this account, for the Maltese are most zealous for the honor of their religion. I need scarcely say, therefore, that they retaliated the contempt of the foreigner with the most cordial hatred of him and his heresy. Nor was this feeling softened or alleviated by the well-meant but injudicious attempts at conversion which were made by some dissenting societies.

Yet, inimical as he may be to our race generally, let us give the Maltese fair play. When conciliated and treated properly, he can show attachment and affection even to the cold impassive sons of the North. The excellent Bishop of Gibraltar has done, and is doing, much to bring the Maltese and the English into friendly contact, and I have never heard his lordship's name mentioned by respectable and well-educated islanders, without hearing it coupled with the strongest expressions of respect and esteem. His lordship has done much for Malta, and, if some of his benevolent and well-meaning endeavors have not met with the success they deserved, the fault must not be ascribed to want of good will, but want of power in him who planned them.

The character of the Maltese seems, as our transatlantic neighbors would say, a cross between the Asiatic and the southern European. The dark eyes, the brown complexion, the language, and the girdle commonly worn by the peasantry, tell of an Eastern origin; but there is a degree of liveliness and fire, and certain scintillations of taste and genius, which claim an Italian descent. Like all insular people, the Maltese feels a pardonable pride in the place of his birth, which he dignifies with the high-sounding title of

Fior del Mondo, though its barren and rocky soil can scarcely produce a flower.

Though the common language of Malta is a dialect of the Punic or Arabic, the law proceedings of the different courts are carried on in Italian, a tongue perfectly unintelligible to the great mass of the people. This might, perhaps, be of less consequence, if the Maltese were not a most litigious race. Next to the clergy, rank the advocates, in point of numbers. It is easy, therefore, to see that law, written and administered in an unknown language, must give room for a thousand quibbles and quiddities which add to the number of law-suits, and benefit no one but the advocates. Another consideration is that this marked preference for Italian on the part of the government tends to retard the progress of the English language among the people. But few speak it, and still fewer read it intelligibly.

The similarity of language attracts them rather to the Italians and to Italian literature, than to ourselves or our authors. Thus, even when they do meet, the English and Maltese must encounter each other on neutral ground. All communication must pass in an idiom with which neither are perfectly familiar. The literature of Italy, too, can bear no comparison with our own for copiousness and richness. Works of poetry, fiction, or devotion may be found in it, but scarcely any on science or philosophy. And it may be questioned whether even, on the three subjects alluded to, the tone of Italian writers is so pure and unalloyed as might be wished. The Maltese, indeed, are not literary. Business, gossip, and the siesta take up their time fully. Yet they have no educational establishments, and those who wish their sons to know more than their ancestors, send them either to the Jesuits in Sicily or to the colleges in France. In the former, they do not imbibe much liking for the heretical yoke of England; in the latter, they acquire infidel notions and make themselves acquainted with the morality of Eugene Sue and Georges Sand. But, with all this, there is an institution at Valetta which claims the pompous title of the University of Malta. They have Greek, Hebrew, mathematical, and Arabic professors, who are paid less than the wages of a respectable housemaid. A few boys assemble daily in the rooms of the University; but the whole place looks as gloomy and deserted as the halls of Oxford and Cambridge

during a long vacation. Ever since the commencement of our *régime* in Malta, there has been an uninterrupted succession of changes. Rector has followed rector, and regulations, three months old, have been made to give way to fresh ones, until the more sensible of the Maltese lost all confidence in the institution, and the university has become a theme for derision and ridicule.

Valetta, though far less than Calais or Dover, boasts of a number of newspapers; the editors of which supply the dearth of news by animated and sometimes ungrammatical attacks on each other. When the freedom of the press was claimed for Malta, the Duke of Wellington said something, I believe, about the equal propriety of conceding it to the deck of a man-of-war. Yet it was carried, and if the result has not been so favorable as might have been expected, we certainly are not to blame. We are the sufferers, for the Maltese use our gift to abuse us, and a young Malta has taken its place among the other juvenilities of the age, whose chief attempt at demonstrating its principles has been a great effort to look ferocious and Italian. The exiles from Italy, to whom we gave refuge, repaid our hospitality by inculcating republican theories among the Maltese,* while a Jesuit padre insinuated from the pulpit of one of the churches that no government unsanctioned by the Pope could prosper, or ought to be obeyed, which declarations he followed up by sundry lucubrations in the Jesuit organ of Valetta.

Malta is a land of churches and of priests. The former are magnificent, and costly in their interiors, but as to the exterior, they seem to share what I must always call the bareness of Italian church architecture. But I must own that I am an enthusiast for Gothic, and therefore due allowance should be made for my declaration. The priests almost outnumber the lay population of the town, to say nothing of the monks. The bishop ordains any one who can prove he has a small income, I believe not more than sixpence or a shilling a day. The consequence is a vast influx of men into the clerical profession, who find no work ready for them, and the sloth and indolence of which this has been the necessary result have not improved the character of the body. Un-

* I allude to transactions in 1842 and 1844. Towards the close of the latter year, the Italian exiles were prohibited by the local government of Malta from writing in the newspapers.

questionably, many talented and worthy men may be found among them, but their number is not legion, and in a profession where conduct and deportment undergo the strictest scrutiny, things that might escape censure in others are not easily passed over or forgotten.

At the corners of the streets or lanes of Valetta, you perceive huge images of the Virgin and of the Saints, arrayed in gorgeous apparel, and having a lamp burning before them. The Maltese touch them respectfully as they pass, and then press their hands to their lips, a mode of salutation common among the idolaters of early times. To this practice it is possible the book of Job alludes,* when it says, "If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand." Such indeed is the extravagant veneration which the Maltese pay to images and pictures, that a German priest, a man of great talent and piety, exclaimed, after he had seen Valetta, almost in the words of St. Luke, "Surely the city is wholly given up to idolatry." Much of the blame, however, of this must rest upon the character of the people as well as of the clergy. An able preacher was once selected to deliver the usual Lent sermons from the pulpit of St. John's. A large congregation assembled at about six o'clock in the morning to hear him. He began by dwelling forcibly on the necessity of contrition and repentance, but he found his auditors yawning and sleepy. Suddenly, he changed the theme, and began a wonderful legend of some saint who walked a dozen miles with his head in his hand. Every body rubbed their eyes, neighbor nudged neighbor; and the legend was listened to with marked attention, while the moral instruction produced a most soporific effect. The southern mind must always have truth in parables, and religion in ceremonies. It can never tolerate the pure abstraction.

The celibate life professed by the priesthood enables them not only to avoid expense, but to accumulate wealth. This generally descends to the nephews and nieces, who supply the place of children to a race of bachelors. It would scarcely be fair to assume, as a general rule, that the single state produces and encourages the love of money, but most

* Job xxxi. 26, 27.

of the Maltese ecclesiastics are noted for their saving propensities.

Some of the wealthiest of the clergy are the canons of St. John's, as the collegiate church was well endowed by the knights. One of the chapter was once wending his way to vespers, when, as he was toiling painfully up one of the streets of stairs leading to the church, he was accosted by a mendicant, who, in a low whining tone, besought his reverence to give him alms. The canon, who was not the most liberal of men, attempted to brush by, but in vain. "*Padre mio*," whined the beggar, "for the love of the Virgin, give me a shilling." The canon gasped, threw up his eyes, and ejaculated, "Santa Maria!" with double emphasis. "Will you give me sixpence then?" rejoined the beggar. "Go along with you," said the canon. "A penny at least?" "No!" "A farthing, perhaps?" "Not a grain," testily replied the priest. The mendicant changed his ground. "Holy father, will you give me your blessing?" "Ah!" said the canon, brightening up, "that is another thing; kneel down, my son." "No," replied the beggar, "I will not; I asked you for a grain, and you refused me. Now, if your blessing were worth a grain you would not bestow it, and so *Addio, Padre mio*."

Malta abounds of course with reminiscences of the knights: they seem to have been much beloved, though in many respects they held the reins of government with a tight hand. No Maltese, however respectable, could pass the palace of the Grand Master, without raising his hat. No native of the island could enter the order, although the highest dignities connected with the church were open to him. The consequences of a life of celibacy, professed by men in the flower of their age, and with much leisure time on their hands, did not operate favorably on the morality of the islanders. Concubinage was common, though strictly forbidden by the statutes of the order.

Among the most peculiar of the customs of the cavalieri, was the regulation with regard to dueling, which recalled some of the practices of early chivalry. The parties who quarreled were to repair to the next street, unsheath their swords, and fight out their duel in public. But at the command of a priest, a lady, or a senior knight, they were enjoined to desist, and to be completely reconciled on the spot.

Of course, such encounters seldom terminated fatally. An old Maltese lady told me that her interference had often been requested by the friends of the belligerent parties, and in no single instance had it ever failed. An old Maltese priest averred that he had often been knocked up at twelve o'clock at night to stop the warlike proceedings of some of the younger cavalieri.

The government of Malta, during the sojourn of the order, was vested in the Grand Council, who exercised a check on the proceedings of their chief. That sovereign was obliged to swear, at his inauguration, faithfully to observe and respect the liberties of the Maltese and their ancient institutions—an oath which was, upon the whole, religiously observed. Of the numerous Grand Masters who presided over the destinies of the order since its removal to Malta, the annals only record the name of one who acted with tyranny and bad faith. I have heard, however, complaints that the exercise of the judicial functions were subject to a certain control; and that the Maltese judges were mostly creatures of the Grand Master. Yet, with all their faults, the Maltese remembers his old masters with regret. Old men will talk sorrowfully of the times of "the religion," when the galleys returned to Valetta laden with the spoils of the hated infidel, when the crescent was hauled down amid the shouts of the Maltese sailors, and the standard of St. John floated proudly in the breeze.

The Knights of Malta still retained an ancient vestige of their former occupation, as attendants on the sick, in the hospital, which they erected at Valetta. With a pardonable ostentation, they waited themselves on the infirm inmates, and conveyed their food and medicines in silver utensils. A large amount of plate belonging to this charitable institution fell into the hands of the French, when they obtained possession of the island.

Perhaps the most interesting part of Malta, as connected with the history of the knights, is the extreme point of the promontory, called Mt. Xibaras, on which stands the comparatively modern Fort of St. Elmo. It was witness to a feat of self-sacrifice and chivalry, which can hardly find a parallel since the days of Leonidas.

At the commencement of the year 1565, the celebrated Suliman filled the Ottoman throne, a prince renowned for

his success in war, and his indelible hatred of the Christian name. The capture of a Turkish vessel, belonging to one of his favorites, had filled him with indignation against the Knights of Malta, which was still more increased by the complaints of a numerous crowd, who beset him on his passage to the mosque, and demanded, with loud cries, satisfaction for the losses they had sustained from the enterprise and restless activity of the galleys of the order. The voice of his people found an echo in the bosom of the monarch, and Suliman determined to fit out a fleet and army that should reduce the island, and totally exterminate its defenders. One hundred and fifty-nine galleys received on board an armament of thirty thousand men, the flower of the Turkish troops, and on the 18th May, 1565, these formidable invaders appeared in sight of Malta. Besides these, their commander, Mustapha Pasha, was promised the valuable aid of the Viceroy of Algiers, the inveterate enemy of the knights, whose prowess by sea he had proved on many occasions.

The Grand Master, Lavalette, could only muster about seven hundred knights, and a motley force of nearly eight thousand five hundred men, composed of the servants at arms, the mercenary troops in the pay of the order, and some peasants and natives of the island, whom attachment to the order, and fear of the sanguinary cruelties of the Turks, had impelled to take up arms. With these inadequate numbers, he intrenched himself in the modern town of Burgo, to the south of the great harbor, having the Fort of St. Angelo, which had been strongly garrisoned, between his forces and the promontory of Xibaras. The latter place became now of great importance, from its central position between the two harbors, into one of which it was necessary for the Turks to penetrate. The commander, Duguarras, with sixty knights, and a company of infantry, shut themselves up in the Fort of St. Elmo, determined to maintain it to the last, even at the cost of their lives. It was there the Turks made their first attack. On the 24th of May, the Pasha commanded a general assault, but he was met with the utmost gallantry, and repelled with a heavy loss. Attack after attack was made in vain; but the number of the defenders decreased daily, and notwithstanding the succors dispatched from time to time by the Grand Master, it be-

came evident that the fort must shortly fall into the hands of the assailants. At length, the Turks, having succeeded in penetrating a short distance into the mouth of the great harbor, prevented any reinforcements from reaching the devoted garrison, who, thus abandoned to their fate, determined to prepare themselves for that death which appeared to all inevitable. The little band received with devotion and fervor, the last sacraments of the church, and then, embracing each other, they repaired to the breach, bearing along with them the wounded in chairs, and there waited the assault of their enemies. On the morning of the 23d of June, the Pasha gave the signal to attack, the conflict was sharp and decisive, and the fall of the last knight, covered with wounds, was succeeded by the planting of the crescent on the ramparts of St. Elmo.

CHAPTER IV.

The East. Fellow-passengers. Cape Matapan. Syra. Greek church. Priesthood. Smyrna. The streets. Bazaars. Mosque. Holy shoes. Misadventure. Departure from Smyrna. Constantinople.

AT Malta, one seems to be on the frontier line which separates the East from the West. It is a kind of neutral ground, on which the habits of the Orient mingle with the usages of Europe. In leaving it, therefore, I felt that I had quitted for a time, that might be more or less prolonged, all the associations and customs of past years. Nor can I tell whether, in doing so, the emotions of pleasure or regret most predominated. The feeling that a new world was opening before me was sobered by the reflection that the old one was fast passing away, never, perhaps, to be beheld again by me.

The traveler for mere amusement can leave without regret scenes that he may shortly anticipate to welcome once more; but one whose lot is fixed in the country to which he is journeying feels that the uncertainty of return clothes with interest each receding object. I could not watch, with mere indifference, the distant towers of Valetta, as our vessel

moved on, and they became gradually more indistinct, and soon disappeared entirely from view.

For years, the East has exercised a mysterious influence over the Western mind. It has been the *El Dorado* of the imagination, and still continues to captivate and allure the fancy, in spite of the prosaic and matter-of-fact attempts of modern travelers to dissipate the illusion, and to destroy the charm. The pages of Marco Polo and Mandeville represent the East of our boyhood, with its various marvels, its mysteries, and its magnificence, but the efforts and energies of their successors have been used to demonstrate that Oriental gold is but tinsel, after all, and that its mysteries and its marvels are as shadowy and unreal as the tales which amuse the uncriticizing fancy of childhood. Truth is sometimes unpleasant, and we do not always thank the hand that tears down the enchanted veil, and shows us squalidness and misery, in the place of the gilded visions of imagination.

My anticipations were, perhaps, less brilliant than those of the untraveled generally are, for, during my stay at Malta, I had heard much of the region to which I was going, and some of my illusions were beginning to fade away. But still there remained much to expect, and to wish for, and it was, therefore, upon the whole, rather gratifying to find one's self once more *en route*.

My *compagnons de voyage* were as mixed a crew as one might wish to see. There were three old Jews with dirty gaberdines, and still dirtier faces, whose gray, uncombed beards hung raggedly down almost to their waists. Their cunning eyes, as stealthy as the glances of a cat, gleamed wilily from beneath their high-arched eyebrows. They seemed every moment to anticipate being either deceived by craft, or plundered by violence. I could have pictured each of them in the position of Isaac of York, eyeing ruefully and suspiciously the hot glowing bars of his dungeon grate, and struggling internally with fear of pain and love of gold. They appeared like Ishmaelites of the town, every man against them, and they against every one. A hard-featured, stern-looking monk, with the aspect of an inquisitor, gazed with undisguised contempt on the children of Abraham; several of his brethren were near him, all going to be employed in the Levantine Missions. One or two Oriental physiognomies mingled with the group on the main deck,

looking awkward, and by no means at home in their semi-European dress.

An Italian artist, with his sketch book under his arm, was going to settle at Constantinople, for he said that, in consequence of the progress of civilization, the Turks might require his services as a miniature painter. Another countryman of his, who had picked up a smattering of physic somewhere, intended to bestow on the unfortunate infidels the fruits of his medical science. He owned he knew little of drugs, but "*che fare*" times were hard, and he must live, even by other people's deaths. An interesting exile sought for that liberty, under the paternal government of Turkey, which was denied him under the equally paternal *régime* of Austria. One man was going to teach the Turks to ride; another intended to be their instructor in the art of war. Verily, the poor Ottomans had reason to exclaim, "Save me from my friends," or rather from those who desire to become such. Then there was the usual *quota* of traveling Englishmen, looking stern and dissatisfied at everybody, a shabbily-dressed German prince, with I do not know how many ancestors; and some gay and lively Frenchmen, who seemed disposed to treat everything with a shrug and a *ma foi*. An enthusiastic American was bent on turning Sancta Sophia into a Presbyterian meeting-house, and had no doubt of success, although, like George Primrose, he seemed to have forgotten that, in order that he might teach the Turks Christianity, it was necessary that they should first teach him Turkish.

But we are in sight of land. Telescopes are in requisition immediately. Guide-books are produced, and referred to with much anxiety. A large map is spread over the covering of the hatchway, and the report that land is in sight seems to stir up everybody to redoubled cheerfulness and activity. Young tourists, from college, strain their eyes, and recall all their classical recollections. The deep blue eyes of the German beam with enthusiasm; the Frenchmen become silent for a moment; young ladies divide their attention between Lord Byron and the horizon; the Englishman lays down his newspaper; while our American friend ejaculates nasally, "that's Greece, I guess."

And Greece it is, as we ascertain from the captain, or at least a very barren part of it, ycleped Cape Matapan. It is

a rocky headland, jutting out into the sea, respectable from its connections, but by no means interesting in itself, and we look upon it as we should upon the ninety-ninth cousin of Napoleon, or some other great man. On the declivity towards the sea, a few stones piled together was pronounced to be a hermitage; but it was uninhabited. Perhaps the hermit had left in disgust, at the modern innovation of steamers; perhaps he was tired of contemplating nothing *save pontus et aër*; but all seemed to agree that he had not been visible of late years. And now we are entering the Archipelago—

“The Isles of Greece, the Isles of Greece,
Where burning Sappho lived and sang.”

But we saw no burning Sappho, only a few Greek fishermen, who, with their long disheveled locks covering their shoulders, gazed at us as we moved by them. At length, Syra was pronounced in sight, and we soon discerned its cone-shaped rock emerging from the waters. We anchored in face of the small town, situated at the foot of the mountain, the higher part of which is inhabited chiefly by Greek Catholics, or those members of the Greek Church who acknowledge the supremacy, and submit to the sway, of the Roman pontiff.

A dilapidated flag, placed on the roof of the quarantine establishment, announced that we were on the point of entering the jurisdiction of King Otho, upon whom one of our English fellow-travelers pronounced no very flattering eulogiums, as we entered the close and filthy streets of his dominions. It seems to be an indisputable axiom, with many of our errant countrymen, that the government of a foreign country is responsible for everything, even for the ill-washed faces and ragged garments of its subjects. The southern nations are not generally noted for cleanliness, although one might expect that the heat would render the cold bath a pleasing and agreeable resort. Yet the use of the cold element is not common even in Turkey, where the ablutions are performed in a room filled with steam, and with almost boiling water.

The dress of the Greeks of Syra was of a very mixed character. Some of the loungers, whom we had encountered on landing, wore a bad imitation of the European costume; others retained the kilts, buskins, and jackets of their native

land; while a third party appeared in the modern Egyptian costume. The two latter were, certainly, more graceful than the former, yet the traveler, who has worn or beheld the flowing robes of Asia, will not be easily reconciled to their tight compression of the arms and legs. The Greek, or Albanian jacket struck one as being more comfortless, although, perhaps, more ornamental, than the dress coat of Europe; while the buskins, although they presented an elegant and showy appearance, must yield, in point of ease, to the loose unfettered drawers of Turkey.

The streets of Syra are very steep, owing to the nature of the ground on which the town is built. Its population, which exceeds thirteen thousand, is larger than the first view of the houses would seem to warrant; but it appears credible enough, after you have traversed the various ins and outs, the turnings and the bends, which are most numerous and complicated. After some difficulty, we reached the house of the Rev. Mr. Hildner, a German clergyman, in the service of the English Church Missionary Society. Mr. H. has opened his schools, under the sanction of government, and is on good terms with the authorities, both civil and ecclesiastical. His establishment consists of a school for boys, and another for girls, and many of his pupils are children of the most respectable Greek families.

It seemed strange to hear little Greek girls of six or seven years of age reading and translating, with ease and fluency, the pages of Herodotus and Xenophon. But the similarity of the modern dialect to the ancient Hellenic renders this comparatively easy. One of our party, however, who piqued himself upon his classical knowledge, was unsuccessful in his attempts to converse in the old dialect with a little girl of ten years who professed to understand and speak Hellenic; but the unintelligibility on both sides was probably occasioned by the difference of pronunciation. The modern Greeks pronounce *Beta* like *v*, and *Upsilon* like *i*, or *y*, while they give the *Chi* a guttural aspiration, like that of the German *ch*. The diphthongs, too, are nearly all pronounced alike, so that the most eminent English scholar would have some difficulty in recognizing by ear even the well-known verses of Homer, if they were read aloud to him.

From the schools, we proceeded to the Greek church, a small, and by no means inelegant building, standing in the

midst of a species of quadrangle, on the four sides of which were the dwellings of the priests. They were all dressed in a kind of long dark cassock, reaching to the ankles, over which was thrown a gown of black cloth. Their hair was worn long, and surmounted by a small round cap. Every one was bearded, for the beard is considered, all over the East, a necessary appendage to the priestly office. A Syrian ecclesiastic whom I knew at Malta remarked of the late Bishop Alexander, that he was a very good man, but that he had no beard, and hinted that this latter disqualification for episcopacy was by no means a light one.

The clergy of the Greek Church are permitted to marry while in deacons' orders, but their bishops and monks are unmarried. If, however, the wife of a papas dies, he cannot give her a successor, and it is said that the knowledge of this gains for her a larger amount of respect and attention than is usually the lot of her sex in the East. A friend of mine, who had resided some time in Syra, was surprised, on entering the house of one of the principal priests, to find the reverend papas washing, with his own hands, the linen of the household. On inquiring the reason, the papas replied, "I do this to save my wife labor, that she may live the longer, for you know, O Kyrie, that the law of our church does not permit me to have another, and I wish to keep this as long as I can."

Preaching forms rarely a portion of the Greek service, the people being instructed in their moral duties chiefly through the medium of the confessional. Confession is one of the Seven Sacraments which the Greeks hold in common with the Latins ; but, among the former, the priest is forbidden to question the penitent, and the latter is not bound to reveal everything, but merely such offences as seem to require ghostly counsel and advice. In the Greek church, the altar, which is square in form, and strongly resembles our own, is separated from the nave by a wooden screen, richly decorated and hung with pictures of the Saviour and the saints. These portraits have frequently the heads, arms, or hands, formed of thin silver plates, which are fastened to the canvass, and present a curious medley, half-image, half-picture. The pulpit, which, although rarely used, forms generally part of the church furniture, is always surmounted by the figure of a dove, with extended wings, said to represent the Holy Ghost.

The part screened off from the choir is termed the Holy of Holies, and, strictly speaking, should never be entered by a layman; but this rule is not always observed.

Leaving the church, we re-embarked, and in a few hours were entering the Gulf of Smyrna. Its shores are formed by two ranges of mountains which unite, just above the city, in a kind of semicircle. The eye wanders with pleasure and interest along the thickly-wooded declivities, till its view rests upon the dark groves of cypress which indicate the site of the cemeteries, the cities of the dead. At the foot of Mount Pagus, is seen the modern town, extending itself along the eastern shore of the gulf, and marking by its domes and minarets the triumph of the crescent over the cross.

Smyrna is generally the first oriental city that greets the eye of the wanderer in Eastern climes, nor does its aspect disappoint the poetical and romantic visions which he may have felt disposed to cherish. The gay colors, and almost Italian exterior of the houses on the quay, conceal the narrow and somewhat filthy streets of the interior, while the really elegant shapes of the domes and minarets, which tower above them, delight as much by their novelty as by their intrinsic beauty. As the eye wanders over the mass of houses, it rests upon the rich and luxuriant gardens which border the town, the picturesque ruins that crown the summit of Mount Pagus, and the not inelegant outlines of the villages in the environs.

Nor is the illusion dispelled when, on landing, the new comer finds himself among the oriental crowd, and gazes, with a mingled feeling of amazement and admiration, on the rich flowing robes of the East, or the gay and glittering costume of the Albanians or Egyptians. As he proceeds along, the narrow streets, with their latticed houses, excite his attention, which is, perhaps, more rudely solicited by a string of loaded camels, whose driver jostles him unceremoniously aside as he passes. Interruptions, indeed, the traveler must expect at every step. Some of these will almost recall to his memory, if he be classical, Horace's humorous accounts of similar troubles in the streets of Rome. A carpenter, with a beam on his shoulder, assails you in front, a file of Turkish soldiers takes you in the rear. A newly-arrived Englishman in Constantinople was once coolly pushed out of the way with the butt end of a musket, for Turkish soldiers are not

prone to sacrifice much to the courtesies of life. You stand engaged in mute admiration of some ancient pillar placed in a modern wine-shop, when a yell like the cry of a despairing Afrite bursts on your ear, and you rush madly into the embraces of a stout, portly Armenian banker, very much to his surprise and your own.

Yet, if heedless of these little inconveniences, you make your way into the bazaar, and establish yourself on one of the stools in front of any of the coffee-houses, you will there be enabled to satiate yourself to the full with Eastern peculiarities and costumes. Inhaling the fumes of what you may call, if you please, the pipe of contemplation, you will not want objects to attract your attention, and inspire you with interest. Above you is the arched roof of the bazaar, gracefully adorned with arabesque painting, and gay with many and brilliant devices. Around you are the shops of which you have so often read in boyhood's chosen classic, the Arabian Nights. How astonished you are to find, instead of the large room usually dignified by the name of a shop in London and Paris, its oriental namesake assuming the form and dimensions of an English stall, or of one of those traveling places of merchandize which one meets with in one's peregrinations at home, laden with fruit or cheap china. The Eastern shop is merely a small square recess in the wall, having a board projecting forth a little way, which serves the double purpose of a counter and a seat. On this the merchant sits cross-legged, smoking his never-failing pipe. You feel in want of something, and would fain have dealings with him, but you are in a land where business is not transacted with the same undignified and uncomfortable rapidity as in England or America.

You make your salutation with much ceremony to the merchant, which he returns in the same manner. Mutual inquiries after each other's health then take place, after which the merchant, if respectable, sends for pipes and coffee from the next coffee-house, or, if poor, he takes the pipe from his lips, wipes the mouth-piece on his sleeve, and hands it to you with a low bow, pressing, at the same time, his hand to his heart. Inclining your head gently, you accept the proffered kindness, and after some indifferent conversation venture to hint at the object of your visit. The goods are brought forth and displayed upon the board, while you make

your choice. And, after a little haggling, but very little if your tradesman is a Turk, you pay your money, and with mutual salutations depart rather with the air of one who has received, than one who has conferred a favor.

The crowd of persons passing and repassing in the bazaars is very great, and mingled with them are numbers of the fair sex, enveloped in veils, or rather wrappers of blue stuff, which reach about half way down the long yellow boots which the Turkish ladies always wear abroad. Their faces are partially concealed by another veil, or cloth of white, which is so arranged as to leave visible only the eyes and the upper half of the nose. They have an unpleasant, ghost-like appearance, and reminded me almost of an old school-boy acquaintance, the Ghoul wife Amina, who was surprised by her husband while devouring a corpse in the neighboring cemetery.

As we were rambling through the streets, a ragged-looking Jew came up and offered to be our guide, for a consideration of course. He was the first Israelite I had seen dressed in the Oriental garb, and it harmonized well with his peculiar features and Eastern physiognomy. Go where they will, the Hebrews bear about with them the indelible marks of their Asiatic origin. The same love of decoration, the same taste for gaudy colors, yea, the same appetite for fried fish, distinguish the inhabitants of Damascus and the denizens of Petticoat Lane. I even fancied, on entering the Jewish quarter of Smyrna, that I recognized that peculiar odor which characterizes also those parts of London devoted to the sale of old clothes.

As foreigners are allowed in Smyrna to visit the mosques, we determined to avail ourselves of this toleration, and desired our conductor to get us admission. Fresh from Europe, we did not think of the prejudices entertained by the Mohammedans with regard to Jews, or anticipate that we should incur the wrath of the faithful, by introducing a Chefoot into the precincts of one of their places of worship. We were soon reminded of whom we had to deal with.

At the porch of the Great Mosque, the Jew stopped, and entered into conversation with a stout, good-natured looking Mohammedan, who, after a little whispering, consented to admit us. We were ordered to pull off our shoes, and this we were quite willing to do, but unfortunately a lady of our

party had on a pair of tightly laced boots, and the lace got into a knot as she was endeavoring in great haste to unfasten it, so that they could not be taken off. Here was a dilemma. The lady could not be left in the street, like the heroine of some old knightly romance, surrounded by ferocious-looking Saracens, and she was also very anxious to see the interior of a mosque. The Jew offered our stout friend, who was a kind of sexton there, a small *douceur*, but he shook his head. The boots were tried again, but the tangled lace was inexorable, and there seemed to be but little chance of our gaining admittance.

At last, one of the standers-by recollected that a great devotee, one Hadjee Mohammed Ibn Abdallah, had left at his decease a pair of holy slippers to the mosque, which slippers were said to inherit the odor of sanctity. Now the shoes of so great a man were evidently better than even the feet or stockings of a female Kafir, and therefore it was agreed that our fair companion should encase her feet, boots and all, in the holy slippers of the late Hadjee. The slippers were brought; they were very dilapidated, very dirty, and if the odor which exhaled from them was the odor of sanctity, it was certainly not very grateful to the nose. The lady gazed at the holy shoes for some time, with indecision mingled with apprehension, and probably with a sort of conviction that, had she been at home, she would have called her maid to take them up with the tongs and deposit them within the dust-hole; however, there was no help for it, and so, with an air of resignation, she thrust her feet into them, and entered the mosque.

We found the interior a lofty and spacious apartment, the marble floor of which was covered with matting. In one of the walls, looking in the direction of Mecca, was the *kublah*, or niche, towards which the worshipers turned their faces in prayer. By the niche was the *mimber*, or pulpit, whence the mollah delivered his weekly sermon. From the roof was suspended a thin iron ring, around which was attached a circle of small glass lamps; several large ostrich eggs and horse tails depended, attached above by brass chains. In fact, nothing can be plainer than the Mohammedan houses of prayer. They rarely have any other decorations than those which I have mentioned, excepting, perhaps, the ornamental *writing* round the cornices, consisting of sentences from the

Koran ; among these, the profession of faith, "There is but one God, and Mohammed is the prophet of God," appears generally the most conspicuous.

On one occasion, a respectable Greek of Constantinople paid a visit of curiosity to one of the mosques of the capital. He was acquainted with Arabic, and was endeavoring to decipher the writing on the walls ; without dreaming of the consequences, he read half aloud the fatal words, "There is but one God, and Mohammed is the prophet of God." Two Turks who were standing by overheard him, and immediately arrested and conveyed him before the Cadi, who gave sentence that he had uttered the creed of Islam, and must therefore make a public profession of the Mohammedan religion in court, or lose his head. Overcome with astonishment and terror, the trembling Greek repeated mechanically the fatal words which sealed him as an apostate for ever. Two nights afterwards, he fled to Venice, where, for aught I know to the contrary, he still resides.

Having seen all that was worthy of notice in the mosque, we prepared to leave it, but we were not fortunate enough to depart in peace ; it may be that the shade of Hadjee Mohammed was hovering over the spot, determined to have vengeance for the disrespect and profanation inflicted on his holy shoes : from a side door there entered, in a great rage, the mollah himself, who, rushing up to our Hebrew conductor, overwhelmed him with epithets of abuse. B—— endeavored to pacify the angry man of the law, but in vain ; he slapped the Jew's face till it rang again, and insisted upon his walking outside instantly. B—— thought it best to order him to wait for us without, and this moderation rather appeased the mollah, who began a kind of grumbling apology for his violence, adding, however, that Jew dogs were only made to be kicked and spit upon, as a kind of prelude, no doubt, to the tortures of Gehennam which they shall receive in the next world ; the Koran says they will be far below the Christians. We did not feel disposed to enter into conversation on the matter, and left the mosque.

We rejoined the poor beaten Jew in the street, who complained greatly of the persecution suffered by his people at the hands of Mohammedans. The Jews in Smyrna have their separate quarter, the gates of which are locked every night. Once a fire broke out in that part, and the guards,

through malice or design, left the gates closed, so that many Jews lost their lives.

The environs of Smyrna present pictures of the most romantic beauty, and afford an agreeable contrast to the dark, narrow, and dirty lanes of the town. Most of the European merchants have their country houses in the neighboring villages of Boudjar, Bournabat, and Sidi Kiouy. Through the gardens or plantations which arise at the back of the town, glide the limpid waves of the Meles, on whose banks, perhaps, Homer wandered when he composed his deathless songs; a rude arch of stone, termed generally the caravan bridge, crosses the Meles not far from the foot of the hill, or Acropolis, on which the citadel once stood. In its vicinity, are several coffee-houses, which receive the holiday-makers of the city on Sundays and other festivals; when may be seen in groups the phlegmatic Turk, dozing over his pipe and seeing visions in the bright tinted clouds; the gay chattering Greek, and the grave Armenian, who seldom speaks except for a consideration; together with the tight swathed and bandaged forms of the sons of Frangistan, who, with miserable taste, prefer generally their monkeyfied costume to the loose, comfortable, and elegant attire of the Oriental.

We left Smyrna in the afternoon, and when I woke the next morning, a general clatter and bustle seemed to announce that we were nearing the imperial city, even Stamboul itself. I hurried on my habiliments, and rushing upon deck beheld a vision of the most glorious and exquisite beauty, far surpassing anything that the most poetical imagination could conceive. I feel my powers of description too feeble and too unsatisfactory to paint the impressions which that scene of more than fairy splendor stamped upon my soul. On my left were the seven towers, the ancient fortifications, the palace of the seraglio with its gardens, and innumerable domes and minarets gilded by the rays of the scarcely risen sun. Beyond was the hilly suburb of Pera, with the cypresses of its cemetery, the Champ des Morts, waving mournfully in the morning breeze, and the ornamented fountain of Top Khana, with hundreds of swift cayiques* skimming lightly over the placid waves of the

* Turkish boats used on the Bosphorus, which are lighter and more elegant than even the wherries of the Thames.

Bosphorus. To the right were the Princes' Islands, with their richly-wooded summits and ancient monastery, the Gulf of Nicomedia, and the gloomy-looking cemeteries of Scutari, while, almost united at the back of the picture, rose the mountains of Europe and Asia, winding and entwining themselves in such a manner as to seem one vast semicircle of hills, covered with kiosks and vineyards, and adorned equally by the luxuriance of nature and the mechanical elegance of art.

We disembarked, and were soon toiling up the narrow lanes of Pera, attended by a couple of Turkish hamals or porters, who conducted us and our baggage in safety to the hospitable portals of Madame Josephine, who herself appeared at her gate, with a good-humored countenance, radiant with smiles, to welcome us to Constantinople and to the Bellevue.



CHAPTER V.

Departure from Constantinople. Samsoun. Mohammed Aga. St. Basil. Ancient monasticism of Pontus. Cazal Kiouy. Nocturnal invaders. Ladik. The Ramadan. Robbers. Oppression of the government. Amasia. Ina Bazaar. Anecdote of a pasha. Turkal. Tokat. Colonization.

CONSTANTINOPLE has been so frequently and so ably described, that I deem it almost needless to say anything respecting it, except perhaps to express a warm admiration of the romantic beauty of its environs, and to extol the many opportunities which it affords a stranger of being initiated, at a cheap rate, into the manners of the East. Not indeed that living or lodgings are reasonable in cost, but a sojourn in the capital encroaches less upon your pocket or your ease than an excursion in the provinces would do, and you are enabled to keep up some of your European associations, which must be abandoned entirely in the purely Oriental regions of the country. It is a mistake to imagine that the civilization of the metropolis has made its way into the rural districts, or that hotels and clean linen are ready to welcome those who venture even twenty miles from the gates of Constantinople.

The traveler in the interior must carry with him his bed, his cooking utensils, his saddles, and his medicines, and reckon upon finding nothing on the road but bare provisions, and ont always a superabundance of these.

We spent the last three days of our sojourn in the Turkish capital in making such purchases as seemed necessary for the journey. Padded saddles, water bags, capotes, stuffed coverlets, and traveling boots, were among the principal articles which we required. These were all made up in bundles, and dispatched on board the Austrian steamer, in which we embarked for Samsoun, on the Black Sea, which we reached without any disaster, even without sea-sickness, which seems, according to an unsavory couplet of Lord Byron's, inseparably connected with the Euxine.

We passed Sinope, the dwelling-place of the cynical Diogenes, and, a few hours after, were discharged with our baggage into a large boat that was hired to convey us to the shore. But, as the sea was very shallow, and would not allow our bark, which was a very primitive affair, to approach near enough to the land, we were carried through the intervening water on men's shoulders, a mode of transit which I recollect was formerly practiced at Calais during the good old days. I had no reason to complain of my biped, who was a stout able-bodied fellow, a hamal, or porter by trade, and therefore used to bearing burdens. Glass or crockery could not have been carried more carefully, and as I looked back and saw one of my companions struggling in the agonies of fear with his steed, a struggle which ended in their both going down with a heavy splash, I really felt no inconsiderable amount of gratitude to the broad-shouldered bearer of burdens who had acquitted himself so successfully.

Marshaled by the vice-consul's khawass, we proceeded to the consulate, but found that the house was undergoing repairs, and that of course we could not be accommodated there. A lodging was, however, procured in the street hard by, and, after a good dinner at the hospitable board of Mr. Stevens, we repaired to our new quarters.

They were decidedly airy, for one of the rooms was nothing more than a raised platform of wood, with a very dilapidated roof, and sheltered at the sides by two walls of very questionable stability. A group of curious idlers, who had followed us from the consulate, stood gazing on our prepara-

tions for retiring to rest. These were soon made. I laid down my padded coverlet on the floor, and, having rolled up several miscellaneous articles so as to form a kind of extempore pillow, I wrapt myself in my capote, and, drawing the hood comfortably over my head, was dozing quietly off, when my incipient slumbers were interrupted by a low hissing sound. I immediately thought of snakes, and, flinging off my hood, started up in some alarm, but was speedily reassured on perceiving that the noise proceeded from the whispers of a group of women who had thrust their heads through a kind of trap-door, and were scrutinizing me at their leisure. The movement I made startled them in their turn, and with a suppressed titter, they vanished, leaving me to undisturbed slumbers.

We rose early the next morning, and after breakfast, prepared to commence our journey. We had secured at Constantinople the services of a Tatar, who, for a certain sum, had covenanted to convey us safely to Mosul. He was an old Turk, with by no means a prepossessing countenance, which was rendered more grim by the mutilated condition of his nose, as well as by the ferocious pair of mustachios which extended on either side of it.

Mohammed Aga, for such was his appellation, had been for many years on the road, but he was now getting stiff and infirm, and could no longer discharge the more active duties of his profession. He was not intrusted, therefore, with the conveyance of government dispatches, as these demanded the activity and dispatch of a younger man. But, as travelers now and then required his services, he had not relinquished entirely his occupation as a Tatar. He was habited in a short jacket, richly braided, his nether man being enveloped in an enormous pair of trunk breeches, terminated by Turkish boots. He wore on his head a fez or red cap, with a blue silk tassel, bound round his brows by a small shawl or handkerchief arranged turban-wise. In addition to this useful protector and guide, we were provided with a magnificent parchment document from his majesty the Sultan, answering the purpose of a continental passport, and known by the name of a firman. This document, however, proved eventually of little use, and it was only by the active endeavors of Mohammed Aga, or Kusker Oglu as he was

sometimes called, that we were enabled to get on at all in many parts of the journey.

The country about Samsoun presented a most agreeable appearance. To the south of the town extends a long range of hills in an easterly direction, covered with luxuriant vegetation, and crowned on the summit by forests of the stunted oak and the graceful acacia. As we advanced, our cavalcade proceeded through leafy avenues formed by projecting branches, which, mingling together overhead, proved a grateful shelter from the powerful rays of the mid-day sun. Here and there, patches of green, sown with wild flowers of various colors, retained their verdure unimpaired, protected by the kindly shade. The silence was unbroken, save by the song of numbers of feathered choristers, who, from their unseen fastnesses in the wood, poured forth an unremitted strain of harmony; occasionally crossing our path, and resting listlessly for a moment on the wing, to take a passing view of the invaders of their tranquillity.

We were now in Pontus, the region to which the great St. Basil transported the monastic system from the flat plains and desert wastes of Egypt. Yet not here, in the midst of nature's secluded beauties, did he fix the abodes of silent meditation and ceaseless prayer. In the rough and savage mountain scenery which borders the dark and inhospitable Euxine, the mind, retiring from the world and its attractive loveliness, found a congenial home. Dark, frowning precipices, and the summits of rocky eminences, tutored the thoughts to higher and more sublime musings. In the majestic and yet fearful solitudes where nature appeared in her grander features, amidst the dark mountain pines and the roaring cascades of a more uncultivated region, men learned to anticipate the terrific splendors of the last great day, the wreck of nature, and the expiring convulsions of creation. The early monks betrayed a singular indifference to the loveliness of a world which they had renounced. The worn and wasted regions in which they generally chose to dwell awoke, perhaps, responsive and sympathetic emotions in hearts too deeply sensible of the barrenness and emptiness of all created things.

As we emerged from the shelter of the forests, the sky, which had hitherto preserved a placid and smiling aspect, became overcharged with dark and lowering clouds; the

rain poured down in torrents, and it seemed desirable that we should seek for some shelter from its violence. We were still at some distance from the place of our destination ; but the Tatar remembered that, by diverging a little from the road, we might reach the village of Cazal Kiouy, where he hoped to find shelter for us.

We put our beasts to a gallop, and, after riding hard for about half an hour, we reached a small collection of mud houses, but learned to our great disappointment that the khan had been occupied early in the day by a caravan of merchants, who of course could not be dislodged. Some delay ensued, but at last the Tatar made room for us in one of the neighboring houses, where he proposed we should spend the night, and then set forward in the morning.

The people to whom the dwelling belonged were transferred, without much ceremony, to an adjoining house, and we hastened with our baggage to take possession of the only decent room on the first story. We ascended by a flight of ruinous wooden stairs, abounding in yawning gaps which threatened to swallow us up at every step. By cautious climbing, however, we succeeded in reaching the top, and beheld before us our destined quarters. If we had been fastidious, the exhibition would have been a sore trial to the nerves. A fire of green wood, just lighted, was pouring forth volumes of smoke, which seemed to be making furious charges against the wind and rain, in its laudable endeavors to force itself through a very wide aperture in the roof. A shriveled old crone, whom I rather ungallantly thought resembled strongly one of the witches in Macbeth, was laboring hard to arrange in some order a vast quantity of small apples, which covered the floor so thickly that not a vestige of it could be discerned.

The Tatar and our servants came to her assistance, and at length succeeded, with some trouble, in piling up two ranges of apple hills against the walls, leaving a sort of valley in the centre for our accommodation. Tired, wet, and hungry, we crowded round the fire, our eyes distilling tears, which mingled with the drops of rain descending from above.

The old woman had put on a large caldron in which was our future dinner, and, as the flame cast its gleam over her decrepit, yet strongly marked, features and long withered arms moving hither and thither, one might have deemed her

an aged portrait of her countrywoman Medea, engaged in the preparation of some mystic charm. The worthy old sybil, however, was very kind and courteous, nodding benignantly to us from time to time, as if to bid us make ourselves at home. The dinner was soon ready, and, having devoured it as well as we could, it seemed advisable to retire as soon as possible to rest. A sheet, extended curtain-wise across the room, separated me from my friend B—— and his wife; we bade each other good night, and, having arranged my bed as well as I could in the valley before alluded to, I endeavored to compose myself to slumber.

For some time I could not get settled. Avalanches of apples poured down from the hills on each side, but at last their locomotive propensities seemed at an end, and I comforted myself with the hope of a good night's rest. The lights were put out in both the compartments, and a silence ensued, which was broken at length by a groan from the other side of the curtain. I soon knew the cause. In four or five minutes, I was covered with myriads of fleas, assisted by other of their allies, who poured in from all quarters. Sleep became out of the question. I groaned and writhed in vain; fresh bites followed each contortion, and my voracious tormentors seemed to be making my body one vast wound. My companions fared no better, and groan answered groan from either side of the curtain. At length, a desperate contortion of mine disturbed the equilibrium of the apples, and brought down such a shower upon me as almost to bury me beneath them.

I could bear it no longer; but, groping my way down the ruined staircase as well as I could, I joined the Tatar, who, with our servants, had comfortably established himself in the lower story. Too feverish to sleep, I availed myself of the remedy he recommended, namely, two cups of Turkish coffee, and, lighting my pipe, I smoked on till the break of day admonished us to mount and away. Thus ended my first night's experience of traveling in the interior.

The next morning, we all mounted and rode sleepily along, still retaining about us the reminiscences of the preceding night's encounters. The road lay through part of the forest we had entered on the previous day, on emerging from which, we entered a widely-extended plain bordered by low hills. The flat dullness of the level ground was succeeded by the

no less wearying ascents and descents of the hill country, which had not been improved by the rains.

After a ride of nine hours we came in sight of Ladik, a pretty town situated in a kind of recess at the foot of some rather lofty hills. We were assigned quarters in the house of an Armenian baker; where we were certainly free from the inconveniences of Cazal Kiouy; but our night's rest was not improved by the noise which celebrated the commencement of the Ramadan. From the vast number of Seyids or descendants of the Prophet, who, with their green turbans ostentatiously displayed, perambulated the streets of Ladik, I was led to conclude that the innovations of reform had not yet reached this quiet nook of the ancient Pontus. The abundance of Seyids seems to indicate, like the multitude of friars in some Roman Catholic countries, that the established religion is flourishing in full vigor. The emblems of relationship to the Prophet of Mecca are more charily displayed where his system has already lost or is losing its sway over the public mind.

The noise and shouting which generally precede the commencement of Ramadan in most Turkish towns may seem a curious forerunner of a fast so rigorously observed, but, during this penitential season, the night is consecrated to feasting and rejoicing, while, during the day, the most rigid mortification prevails. Every night of this month of abasement presents the same singular contrast of boisterous mirth with mortification that the carnival does, in Roman Catholic countries, with the penitential rigors of Lent. As soon as the shouting in the streets had died away, a tribe of howling dervishes in an adjacent mosque took upon themselves to continue the reign of noise, and they supported it manfully till near midnight, when I fell asleep in the midst of the din.

The next morning, most of the faces we met presented the wan and lugubrious appearance of men who had been making merry over night. They scowled at us as we rode along, for to encounter a Christian at the time of a solemn fast or festival is as unwelcome to a Turk as the flesh of the unclean beast. Even in Constantinople it is only lately that Christians deemed it prudent to venture abroad during these seasons of rampant bigotry and fanaticism.

On leaving Ladik, we continued our route over the hills for some time, till we met two men armed in a very irregu-

lar manner, who began to regale us with the tidings that a large band of robbers was abroad, in consequence of which they had been placed there by government to escort travelers as far as the limits of the plain of Amasia. Their protection, however, was not likely to prove very efficient in case of attack, as one of their muskets wanted a lock, and the other, from its rusty appearance, seemed likely to do its owner more injury than any one else. Still, we deemed it advisable to accept of them as a guard, not knowing whether, in case of refusal, they might not have thought fit to bring the robbers upon us. It is generally believed that the authorities in these parts have a secret understanding with the banditti, and give them intimation of the movements of travelers. In case they are not to attack the person or caravan, one or more individuals known to the robbers accompany him or it, and thus guarantee a safe passage. A similar practice exists among the Bedouins in some parts. It was not unlikely, therefore, that our guides might be themselves members of, or connected with, the band of depredators from whom they were deputed to guard us. At all events, if there had not been some mutual good understanding, their number and their arms were ill qualified to afford us any solid protection.

While on this subject, I may remark that most of these banditti have been driven to a course of violence and crime by the grinding tyranny of the government. The heavy taxation, and the vexatious measures resorted to for its exaction, will often, in a few days, make desolate a whole village, and compel its inhabitants to take refuge in the neighboring woods and mountains.

The peasant quits the mud cottage of his fathers with his wife and children, procures either by craft or plunder some weapons, and, preserving a tacit good understanding with his fellow-villagers who remain behind, he employs them as spies on the movements of travelers. For a time he pursues a hazardous and wandering life, till he has either secured enough booty to be able to make his peace with the pasha, or has rendered himself too obnoxious to be forgiven. In the latter case, he is often hunted by the savage Albanian irregulars to his mountain lair, where he meets death resolutely with arms in his hands, or is overpowered and taken alive, to be reserved for the most exquisite and refined tortures. Writhing in agony on the stake, he not unfrequently

maintains his courage unbroken to the last, and, maddened by torture and despair, he invokes with his last breath the curses of Heaven on the head of his oppressor. I have often, in the course of a day's ride, encountered several of these deserted villages abandoned by the whole of their unfortunate inhabitants, who had chosen rather to brave the perils and hardships of a robber's life than submit to the grinding tyranny of their governors.

On leaving the hilly region, we entered a widely-extended plain, bearing the signs of cultivation and abundant fertility. It is watered by the river called anciently the Iris, and is bounded on all sides by mountain ranges. At the further extremity, near the foot of a chain of lofty eminences which overhang the town, stands the city of Amasia, noted in history as having been the birthplace of Mithridates and Strabo. As the traveler makes a slight circuit, he passes by some low rocks, in which are cut several sepulchral chambers. A lofty eminence, crowned with the ruins of an ancient castle, rises abruptly in the vicinity of the town. The city is built on the two banks of the Iris, which are connected by bridges constructed for the most part from the relics of the ancient city. Large and luxuriant plantations surround the town, irrigated by numerous water-mills, which are situated on the banks of the river. The gilded dome and minarets of the principal mosque attract the attention, on entering the city, by the taste and splendor of their decorations; but the main body of the building differs so little from the ordinary style of mosques that it scarcely merits particular notice.

The governor had quartered us in a house connected with the Armenian church, in the lower part of which was a boy's school. Presently, the schoolmaster himself came to pay us a visit. He said that the boys were instructed to read and write Armenian and Turkish. Their books had been supplied by the American Presbyterian missionaries at Constantinople, whom, like many other Orientals, he confounded with the English, and supposed them to be representatives of the Church of England. I found on inquiry that the Bible was nearly the only book used in Armenian schools. Most of the Eastern Christian children learn to read from it, as the Oriental churches have not the same prejudices which are entertained by the Romanists against the indiscriminate use of the Scriptures by the laity.

Few boys at school learn more than the elements of reading and writing. As soon as they can read correctly, and write intelligibly, they begin to assist their parents in their trade or commerce. Those who have a turn for literature study the liturgies and legends of their church, which are generally written in ancient Armenian, a dialect bearing the same relation to the modern tongue as the phraseology of Chaucer to the English spoken at the present day. The Easterns are not, as a people, partial to science or literature. Theology is their great forte, and to this they consider all other branches of knowledge subordinate. I am very much of their opinion.

In the evening, M. Krug, a Swiss mercantile agent, and the only European in the town, called upon us. He was engaged in the collection and exportation of leeches, of which great numbers are to be found in the small streams, which branch off from the Iris, as well as in that river itself. With M. Krug came a young Armenian merchant, who was engaged in the silk trade, a branch of commerce for which Amasia is famous.

We left Amasia early in the morning, and rode for about three miles over an uncultivated and undulating tract of country. At this distance from the town, stands a ruined edifice, built over a spring of water, which is said to have been produced by the touch of the body of St. John Chrysostom, deposited on this spot by the bearers who were conveying the corpse to Constantinople from its obscure sepulchre in Comana, a small town of Pontus.

The road from the spring to the village of Ina Bazaar was dull and monotonous, surrounded on both sides by desolate tracts of waste land covered with furze-bushes, and other wild productions of the desert. The village consisted of a few mud huts, with a small mosque, and is situated about eighteen miles to the south of Amasia.

From Ina Bazaar we proceeded to Turkal, a large village, containing about one thousand five hundred people, built on the banks of a small rivulet. In the course of the day, we passed a durbend or temporary barrack, erected for the use of the irregulars appointed by the pasha to guard the roads. They were wretchedly clad, and as wretchedly armed. Three or four of them were grouped round the fire roasting kabob. This name is given to small pieces of meat, spitted together on a skewer and roasted. The military cooks, being unpro-

vided with proper skewers, used their ramrods instead. They were kind enough to cook some for us, which we enjoyed exceedingly, after our uninteresting and monotonous journey.

The mention of the ramrod reminds me of one of those capricious acts of brutal cruelty by which the Turkish governors have been, and still are, disgraced. A pasha of some note had risen from the humble situation of a cook to the high station of governor of a province. His excellency was proverbial, after his elevation, for his nice culinary judgment, as well as for his attachment to the pleasures of the table. One day the kabob tasted but indifferently. The pasha called the cook, who, trembling and afraid, appeared meekly before the great man.

"Son of a burnt father," cried his excellency, in a rage, "what have you been doing to my kabob?"

The cook was all ignorance and innocence. The skewer on which the meat had been dressed was produced, and appeared to have been slightly charred by the operations of the preceding day.

"Do you make me eat cinders, O unclean?" indignantly demanded the irate epicure, and, drawing from his pistol the bright and polished ramrod, he commanded that it should be made red hot, and thrust through the tongue of the unfortunate cook. Happily for Turkey, instances of this kind of wanton barbarity are becoming more rare; but we still hear of acts of savage cruelty, perpetrated without shame and without punishment in the districts removed from the surveillance of Europe, and the capital.

From Turkal we had a long and tedious ride to the city of Tocat. This place is distant about sixty miles to the south of Amasia, and is situated on the banks of the Iris. It is surrounded by gardens and vineyards, and is famed for the flavor and abundance of its fruit. Indeed, the Pashalic of Sivas may be considered as one of the most naturally fertile tracts of Asiatic Turkey; but the tyranny and oppression of man have done their utmost to check the bounty of nature, and to prevent that bounty from being multiplied by cultivation. Were the immense regions of untilled soil, now covered with furze and other useless and unprofitable vegetation, subjected to the labors of an enterprising, industrious, and free peasantry, the wild and the waste would soon lose their desolate appear-

ance, and display the pleasing prospect of an extensive and well cultivated garden.

I may be mistaken in my judgment, but I have often thought, while wandering over the once fertile and productive regions of Asiatic Turkey, that considerable benefit might accrue from their colonization by emigrants from Europe. We send annually large bodies of our countrymen to the antipodes, when a more salubrious climate and a more fruitful soil might be allotted to them nearer home. In a land where labor is cheap, and the necessities of life easily procured, a colony might at once commence their operations, with equal benefit to the inhabitants and themselves. Protected by the agents of European sovereigns from the capricious tyranny of the Turks, their intercourse with the natives would tend, almost necessarily, to civilize and to elevate them in the scale of humanity. The blessings of sound morality and pure religion would be appreciated and felt by the Christians of the East, and might be the means of raising from their present degradation the once flourishing and widely-extended Oriental churches.

The heat is trifling when compared with India and Ceylon, where many of our countrymen have established themselves as merchants and planters. The objections of the Turkish government might be easily overruled by the influence of European power, and one of the finest portions of the globe, with its unfortunate inhabitants, rescued from the barbarism which is annually tending to produce final desolation and decay. Measures have already been taken, as far as I can understand, for the colonization of Syria, and the same arguments which prove the propriety and desirableness of such a step will apply with equal force to the territory of which I am now writing.

At present the natives of this land, especially the Christians, look with hope and expectation to the West, and would gladly hail its sovereigns as their deliverers from a system as cruel as it is blindly destructive. The satraps of the Sultan, indifferent to everything but the calls of personal avarice, blight the hopes and paralyze the endeavors of individual enterprise, which often receives, as a reward for its exertion, spoliation and torture, a painful prison, and a dishonored grave.

CHAPTER VI.

Tocat. Papal Armenians. Greek church. Nuns of St. Basil. Martyn's grave. Sivas. Scriptural allusion. Legend of the Two Brothers. Mountain scenery. Ulash. Hekim khan. Kabban Maaden. Mezraa. Entry of a pasha. Province of Diarbekir and its boundaries.

THE Governor of Tocat had assigned us lodgings in the Episcopal house, or convent of the Papal Armenians. We were hospitably received by two priests who had been educated at the Propaganda College in Rome, and spoke tolerable Italian. The bishop was absent, making one of his official visitations, but we experienced no lack of welcome on this account. We were struck by the air of neatness that distinguished both the dress and the dwelling of our worthy hosts, and rendered their habitation so very different from those of the generality of Oriental Christians. It is certainly an undeniable fact that those members of the Eastern churches who have admitted the supremacy of Rome are much more remarkable, as a body, for cleanliness and intelligence, than their independent brethren. I attribute this, mainly, to the frequent visits paid by members of their priesthood and episcopate to Italy and France, as well as to the effects of the education received by various young men of their body in the college of the Propaganda. This intercourse with Europe, limited as it is, gives the papal Orientals a great advantage over their co-religionists, who go on flourishing in dirt and ignorance, unchecked and undisturbed by foreign monitions or interference.

We found at Tocat an Austrian engineer, who was establishing some copper works, the material for which was furnished by the mines of Arghana Maaden. Tocat is famed for its copper utensils, of which a large exportation takes place yearly. An agent for leeches had also taken up his residence in this town; he was an Austrian by birth, and

was connected with a company at Trieste, who had several employés in various parts of Greece and Asia Minor.

The next day after our arrival, we repaired to visit the Greek church, which was under the custody of some nuns, of the order of St. Basil; the priest having gone some distance into the country, to serve another congregation. As the church was not in use, we asked permission to read our morning prayers there, which was cheerfully granted. We each took possession of a stall in the choir, and turning our faces to the altar, B—— read, while I made the responses. A few Greeks, who had been attracted to the spot by curiosity, and the novelty, in their eyes, of an English service, remained during our prayers, and conducted themselves with great reverence and decorum. We felt ourselves once more among Christian brethren, no small consolation, when wandering in a land where you are perpetually reminded of the predominance of Islam over Christianity. An acolyte came forward before we began our prayers, and lighted, with much ceremony, two large candles, about sixteen inches in circumference, and nearly ten feet in height, that were placed on two massive brass candlesticks, before the entrance to the sanctuary.

After prayers, we adjourned to the neighboring house, where the nuns received us with great kindness. They were all advanced in years, but wore no veils, nor did they exhibit any signs of shyness or reserve. They talked fluently, and asked many questions relative to the English Church and nation, of which they knew only that such a country existed. They did not seem to prize very highly the celibacy they professed, for they scolded me for remaining single; and asked the reason why I was not married. They gave us some fruit and Rosolio, of which, however, they did not partake themselves.

On leaving the Greek church, we proceeded to the Armenian cemetery, accompanied by an Armenian priest, whom he had encountered on the way. He was the individual who had performed the last rites of Christian burial over the remains of the devoted missionary, Martyn, who died here, on his way back to his native land, far from his fellow-countrymen, surrounded by strangers, and exposed to the brutality of his Tatar, who hurried him on without mercy, from stage to stage. The poor Armenians, however, did what they

could ; they tended his dying pillow, and they consigned his last relics to the dust, accompanied by the solemn, soothing rites of the Christian service. Their simple veneration for him outlasted the tomb, and the hands of the Christians of Tocat weed and tend the grave of the stranger from a distant isle. The Armenian priest who accompanied us stood for some moments with his turban off, at the head of the grave, engaged in prayer. As we turned to go away, he remarked, "he was a martyr of Jesus Christ ; may his soul rest in peace !" A few wild flowers were growing by the grave. I plucked one of them, and have regarded it ever since as the memorial of a martyr's resting-place.

We left Tocat at about 8 A. M., and pursued our journey over a rude and mountainous district, abounding in rocky passes and defiles. At certain distances, the traveler encounters rude barracks, situated by the wayside, and termed durbends, where small bodies of irregular troops are posted, to guard the roads from the depredations of the Kurds and other plunderers. As we passed along, we noticed a few rude stones fixed in the earth, marking out the graves of this wild and wandering people, who, like the Bedouin Arabs, rove about the country with their black tents, and spurn anything like a fixed or settled habitation.

The snow began to fall thickly around us, as we journeyed on, and the roads through which we passed were fast assuming the hue of the lofty mountain summits which surrounded us on every side. We were now approaching the high table land in the vicinity of Sivas, and the cold became more and more piercing, notwithstanding our thick capotes and heavy boots.

We passed the night at Ghir Khan, about twenty-seven miles from Tocat, a comparatively short distance, but it occupied nearly nine hours, as we marched at caravan pace, which rarely exceeds three miles an hour. On the morning, we started at half-past six A. M. for Sivas, which we reached in about eight hours. As we drew near the town, the cold increased in rigor, and some of our first purchases were several pairs of thick woolen gloves, of which the inhabitants manufacture large quantities.

Sivas, the ancient Sebaste, is situated at a small distance from the range of mountains known in Europe by the name of Anti-Taurus. The cold and chilling blasts from their

summits render its winters almost as rigorous as those of France or Germany. Snow and ice are by no means uncommon, and the nights, even in summer, present a freezing contrast to the heat of the days. Frequently, indeed, have I been reminded, while traveling in these regions, of the seeming contradictory assertion of the patriarch, in Genesis xxxi. 40: "In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night."

The modern Sebaste is not celebrated for its cleanliness, as it is one of the most filthy towns I ever passed through: nor does it possess any edifice worth noticing. Its only advantage seems to be a fine view of the neighboring mountains, which range along to the north-east and south-west of the city. Finding, therefore, little to interest us in the place itself, we employed our leisure in arming ourselves for the passage of the Taurus, on the ensuing day, with all kinds of woollen defences against the cold.

At 8 A. M., we left Sivas, and began the gradual ascent of the hills we had been contemplating yesterday. As we advanced, the cold grew more intense: but, being well fortified against it, I rather enjoyed its bracing effects. Perhaps nothing could be more comfortable or even luxurious than the thick and well-lined hood of the capote, which, drawn over my head, and arranged something like a friar's cowl, enabled me to bid defiance to the icy breeze. My legs were enveloped in long woollen hose, which, although comfortable in the extreme, must have made one resemble externally one of those straw-stuffed effigies of Guy Fawkes which are, or rather were, the delight of London boys on the fifth of November. A flask of cold rakee and water hangs at my saddle-bow, and the fumes of my chibouque are curling gracefully above in the frosty air. I grow indifferent to the blast as it howls by, and gird up my loins cheerfully, to encounter the rigors of the Taurus.

About seven miles from Sivas is a double passage in the mountains, which is known by the name of the Two Brothers. The two paths are divided from each other by a ledge of rock which effectually prevents the persons who choose the one from observing those who pass through the other. The legend to which the appellation refers is, to the best of my recollection, as follows:—

Once there dwelt at Constantinople a merchant of great

wealth, who had an only brother, also engaged in commerce, at the same time, at Baghdad. And it came to pass that they made a covenant with each other that, in order to keep alive their fraternal affection, they would visit one another on alternate years at their several places of abode. This practice they continued for a long time; and the khans of Constantinople and Baghdad were loud in their praises of the love and mutual tenderness of the two brothers. But it happened that a tyrannical vizier occupied the chief seat on the diwan at that time, and he hated the Constantinople merchant for his probity, and he envied him for his riches: so the result was that one day he threw him into prison, and would fain have strangled or beheaded him if he had not been prevented. The aga of the Janizaries, however, had long been a friend, and was originally a protégé of the good merchant. He had seen with indignation the arrest of his patron, and having sundry other causes of complaint against the unjust vizier, he stirred up his troops to demand the head of the unpopular minister.

While these measures were in progress, the unfortunate merchant remained in his prison, with the inevitable prospect of death before his eyes. Calling to him one of his friends, he said, mournfully, "Oh, my brother! God is great, from Him we come, and unto Him we return. This unclean fellow of a vizier seeks my riches; and for the sake of them will not hesitate to take my head. Praise be to God, I am not unwilling to die: but there is one thing which disturbs me. It is now the time for my brother's visit, and he will soon be leaving Baghdad. Do thou, therefore, hasten to him, and acquaint him with what has befallen me, that he may spare the journey, and not expose himself to the peril of falling into the hands of the vizier."

When the merchant had said these words, his friend wept sore; and promised, by the All-Merciful, that he would perform his request.

"Then," said the merchant, "go to my stables, and take from thence the fleetest of my Arab mares, and tarry neither day nor night until thou reach Baghdad, the city of peace."

His friend answered, "There is no trust save in God, the Merciful and Gracious;" and he took from the stables an Arab mare of great price, and he hasted on his way, till, on the fourteenth day, he discerned the minarets of Baghdad. Then he entered into the house of the merchant's brother,

and saluted him, and he told him the tidings of which he was the bearer. The merchant's brother smote his face, and rent his clothes; and he exclaimed, "Oh God, the Merciful One!" Moreover, he remained that day absorbed in grief. But it came to pass that, on the morrow, he said, "If it please God, I will arise and go to Constantinople; and it may be that I shall see my brother before Azrael summons him away."

Then he made himself ready, and set forth, the messenger also going with him. But in the mean time the aga of the Janizaries had incited his men to rebel, they attacked the palace, with loud cries, and the vizier was delivered unto them, and they cut off his head; while, by the interest of the aga, the merchant was appointed in his room. Then the merchant remembered the message which he had sent to his brother; and he besought the Sultan to suffer him to go to Baghdad to see and comfort him, for he feared that the tidings would greatly have distressed him. And the Sultan said unto him, "Go." So he took ten slaves with him, and departed.

Now it happened that both the brothers arrived at the opposite entrances of the pass at the same time, but they each took a different path, and thus missed each other; so the merchant of Constantinople went on to Baghdad, and his brother to Constantinople, where he was greatly overjoyed to hear what had occurred, and determined on returning to meet his brother half-way. But, as he was obliged to perform part of the journey by sea, he was delayed longer than he expected, and he arrived at the pass just as his brother reached it; but this time they took the same road, and they met half-way and embraced each other, and the Baghdad merchant accompanied his brother to Constantinople, where he was loaded with wealth and honors, and died at a good old age, leaving a numerous family to perpetuate his name, and inherit his gains. Thus ends the legend of the Two Brothers, which, although I cannot vouch for its authenticity, seems too romantic and interesting not to find a place in these pages.

On leaving the pass, the road began to descend until we reached a level valley, occupying the intervening space between the high ground which we had left, and another range of lofty mountains that rose before us in majestic splendor, their towering crests covered with snow. As we passed

along, we observed a salt spring, from which great quantities of that mineral were extracted during the summer season by the process of evaporation. The valley we rode through was desolate and void of cultivation, and it was with no small gratification that I found myself once more ascending towards the mountain region. Here everything presented images of the most sublime character. The sun's rays lit up the whole, and cast into strong relief the lofty peaks of the mountain giants, each rearing his snowy crest resembling the plumed casque of some ancient Titan, and exulting in his strength. Dark ravines yawned at our side, and disclosed masses of vegetation at the bottom of their profound abysses, while here and there a rivulet fell with gentle murmurs from rock to rock, and finally precipitated itself with a loud roar into some basin, prepared by nature's hand to receive it down below.

Our roads were filled with large fragments of rock, which had from time to time been detached from the surrounding mountains, and the horses toiled slowly and painfully up the ascent. After a journey of six hours, we reached Ulash, a small collection of huts, where we found wretched accommodations.

From Ulash we pursued our route through a barren and mountainous region, now ascending and then again descending; now among the lofty peaks and table-lands of the Taurus, and now crossing some valley which looked the very picture of desolation. Our progress was slow, as we wished to keep with our baggage, which could not follow very rapidly up the steep and stony paths. Our night accommodations at the several villages of Delikli Tash, Kaugul, and Alajah Khan, were miserable in the extreme, and we were often obliged to share the mud room allotted to us, with our baggage horses and mules. In the latter villages, we found the dwellings almost subterranean, the lower part of each abode resting some feet below the surface of the earth; others were mere caves, hollowed in the side of a small mound or eminence. In these semi-subterranean houses, the tops of which emerged like so many ant-hills from the level of the ground, the unfortunate peasants burrowed like moles, the light glimmering through a small aperture in the roof.

The fourth day after our departure from Sivas, we reached Hekim Khan, a village composed of huts constructed on the principle which I have before alluded to. One half of the

villagers were Christians of the Armenian church, and shortly after our arrival, we received a visit from their priest, who had brought a few coins to dispose of. His dress and general appearance betokened the most abject poverty, and he told us a sad tale of the oppression under which his people groaned. Time after time they had seen their little church plundered and desecrated by the infidel, their wives dishonored, and their children carried away captive into a distant land. Yet still they continued to linger among the scenes endeared to them by the associations of childhood, and to maintain faithfully and unflinchingly the creed of their fathers.

At our request, the poor priest led the way to his little church. Its exterior was as plain and unassuming as any of the mud cabins by which it was surrounded. A descent of a few steps led to a door almost below the surface of the street, under whose low portal we crept, rather than walked, into the church. The interior was almost as mean as the wretched apartment we had just quitted. The walls were of mud, and a close and earthly odor seemed struggling with the sweet savor of the incense which had accompanied the celebration of the eucharist on the previous day. Four rude pillars of pine, which age or polish had rendered quite red, supported the mud roof, while a kind of cupboard formed of deal boards constituted the altar. A pair of curtains of dirty red cotton, begrimed with smoke and dirt, served in place of the stone or wooden screen, which, in all oriental churches, divides the sanctuary from the choir. Above the altar was a painting of the Virgin and child of no mean execution, which the ruthless spoliators had left untouched. To the left was the portrait of a bishop, and to the right that of a martyr of the Armenian church. In a recess at the side, were two worm-eaten boxes, containing the tattered remains of the liturgies and service books.

The poor Christians crowded round us with interest as we examined their little church and its contents. In their simplicity, they begged of us to represent their wretched state, and the oppressions which they suffered, to the Queen of England, and to their brethren in our own free and happy land. Poor people, they little knew that the days of the Crusaders had past, and that Christian princes, from motives

of state policy, had become the friends and allies of their persecutors.

The priest, like the rest of his flock, supported himself by the work of his hands. His condition, and the aspect of his simple church, brought to my mind the recollection of primitive times, when the early believers hid themselves and practiced their sacred rites in the caves and dens of the earth, while their priests and even bishops labored with their own hands, that they might not be chargeable to their poor and oppressed flocks. The worthy man was almost overpowered with joy when we poured into his rude and horny palm a sum which must have seemed almost inexhaustible to him, in exchange for a few coins which he had brought us for sale. He and others asked us for some Armenian books, but we had none to give. An American missionary who had passed that way a short time before our arrival had left some books and tracts in vulgar Armenian for the use of the villagers, which had been carefully laid by in the church chest.

At 4 A. M., we left Hekim Khan. After riding for about an hour in darkness, we came to a steep and almost perpendicular mountain, resembling in shape the cone of a sugar-loaf, to which is affixed the title of the camel's back, because its summit has been assimilated to the hump of that animal. The path was dangerous, or would have been to any animal but a Turkish post horse; however, we got over it safely, and soon descended into an extensive plain, called the Sultan's Pasture Ground. It is said that Murad encamped here when on his way to besiege Baghdad.* We still continued gradually descending, until our road lay for some miles over a narrow plain surrounded on all sides with hills, beyond which the snow-capped summits of lofty mountains were discernible.

We passed the night in a mud hut, and arrived the next

* The Sultan Murad IV. was one of the most successful of the princes of the Ottoman line. At an early age, he succeeded Mustapha I., his uncle, who had been deposed by the Janizaries in 1622. Having concluded a peace with the Emperor Ferdinand II., he resolved to turn his arms against Persia. He began the war by laying siege to Baghdad, which was then garrisoned by Persian troops. He was at first obliged to retire; but in 1637 he again took the field, stormed Baghdad, and disgraced his reputation by the cruel massacre of the greater part of the inhabitants. In 1639, he returned to Constantinople, and made peace with Persia, which event he did not long survive, as a fit of prolonged debauchery soon afterwards put an end to his life.

day at Kabban Maaden, where, for the first time, we saw the Euphrates, here a comparatively narrow stream flowing between two opposite ranges of rock. We had, during the two previous days, forded several of its tributary streams, which are known by different appellations; but it was with no small interest that we found ourselves on the banks of a river so noted for its historical and scriptural associations. The width of the Euphrates at Kabban Maaden scarcely equals that of the Thames at Twickenham; its current was rapid, and its channel was said to be much deeper here than it is nearer the sea.

Kabban Maaden is famous for its silver mines, the working of which is superintended by Europeans. About two hundred Greeks are employed in the works, and those of them with whom we conversed seemed satisfied with their employment and treatment. The silver ore is found to be largely mixed with lead, from which it is separated in a furnace, worked only at night by the Greeks.

Leaving Kabban Maaden, we proceeded to Peltè, about twenty miles distant from the former, a miserable collection of mud huts, inhabited by most inhospitable Moslems, who would scarcely afford us the shelter of a roof. However, our Tatar's influence was successful in procuring us a place wherein to pass the night.

The next morning, we gladly quitted our churlish hosts, and after three hours' ride reached Mezraa, a town of some size, where we put up at the post house, a commodious and comfortable building, commanding a good view of the road and of the town. Seated on our carpets, we enjoyed the luxury of a bowl of Leben (sour milk), and procured, for a trifle, some delicious grapes, as they are produced in great abundance by the vines surrounding the town. The heavy clusters which loaded our leaden tray recalled to mind the grapes of Eshcol, which the spies brought to the children of Israel as the first fruits of the Promised Land.

As I was quietly inhaling my chibouque in the wooden balcony outside the chief apartment, the sound of drums and trumpets disturbed my half-sleepy reverie; and the Tatar came to announce that the Pasha of Kharpoot, who had been newly appointed, and whose usual official residence was at Mezraa, was now entering the town. I hurried to *the window* commanding the best view of the cavalcade,

which was as striking and as gay as eastern pomp could make it. Horse-tail standards were mingled with banners of green silk, inscribed with sentences from the Koran ; Kurdish chiefs, distinguished by their gaudy turbans and wide pantaloons, decorated with gold or silver embroidery, mingled with the troops of mounted officials, clad in the ungraceful uniform of Europe. Spears glittered, spurs jingled, and the band of the pasha performed military music with some correctness and skill.

The *cadi* and *mufi* were there to offer the homage and recognition of law and religion to the representative of the sovereign ; and those who did not know the truth might imagine that there was some sincerity in the acclamations with which the new governor was welcomed. And yet oppression had been at work to furnish all this splendor. Every town or village through which the procession passed had been compelled to supply provisions and forage gratis for the pasha and his hungry followers, who doubtless exacted four-fold more than their instructions bade them, and insulted and perhaps injured severely the poor peasants whom they stripped of their all. And, as I thought on this, and more than this, on wives and daughters torn away to languish in the harem of a tyrant, or abandoned, perhaps, to glut the brutality of his followers ; as I pondered over old age, beaten and degraded, honesty plundered of its lawful gains, and numberless victims driven forth from their childhood's homes to wander, like outcasts, on the mountains, till they terminated their career by a cruel and agonizing death, I felt deep inward satisfaction, and heartfelt gratitude to the Almighty, that I was not a Turkish pasha.

We had entered near Kabban Maaden, the Pachalic of Diarbekir, which occupies the northern extremity of the ancient land of Naharaim, the Mesopotamia of the Greeks. It contains the cities of Diarbekir, and Urfah, better known in history as Amida and Edessa. Continuing its natural boundary towards the east, by the mountain chain, which descends almost in a curve from Mardin to Sinjar, we may define, with tolerable accuracy, the general extent of the Roman dominion to the eastward. Occasional enterprises, indeed, may have led the masters of the Western world as far as the banks of the Tigris, and the regions southward of Mosul ; but their actual territory can hardly have extended

beyond the mountains of Singara. To the westward of these natural fortifications they possessed cities of no inconsiderable strength and size, and we read, almost with surprise, that the border town of Nisibis was able to repel, in later times, three successive assaults made by the whole force of the Persian monarchy, under one of its most warlike sovereigns. With the loss of that city, and the infringements of their natural frontier, began the decline of Roman power in the extreme east, a decline which was consummated by the conquests of the successors of Mohammed, aided, or at least unopposed, by the Christians of the Nestorian and Jacobite communities, whose affections the Greeks of the Lower Empire had persisted in alienating by a series of insults and persecutions.

After leaving Kabban Maaden, we seem to have done with the Greek Church. Except at Diarbekir, where their numbers are few, the followers of the imperial creed, called from that circumstance Melkites or King's men, have left no traces of their rites in Mesopotamia. The Jacobites and the Nestorians, with here or there a few Armenians, who are, however, only sojourners, and not originally natives of the country, seem to divide between them the land of the two rivers. The rough and guttural tones of the Chaldee or Syrian ritual succeed to the polished accents and winning melody of the Greek. Perhaps the same difference may have been observable in ancient days. The Hellenic bore partial sway at Amida and Nisibis: but it was not the idiom of the country. Even St. Ephraim, though educated at Edessa, was little versed in Greek. The natives of Mesopotamia maintained manfully their own languages, and resisted the fascinations of that musical dialect which had subdued by its charms other and remoter nations.

CHAPTER VII.

Anti-Taurus. Argana Maaden. Armenian house. Black tents of Bektash Aga. Arrival of Osman Pasha. Chimbél barn. Diarbekir. A disappointment. Deacons of the Syrian church. SS. Cosmas and Damianus. Reputed miraculous oil. Progress of the Roman see in the East. French policy. Syrian church and pictures.

WE had hitherto been wandering among the wild scenery of the Taurus, but we were to make our last essay of it on leaving Mezraa. From the day that we left Sivas, mountains and rocks had been our constant companions; and our farewell of them was accompanied by circumstances which tended to awaken our regret at parting. We left Mezraa before daybreak, and were hardly clear of the town before we began ascending. The lower ranges of rocky hills were soon passed; but at the foot of the higher and steeper mountains, we paused for a quarter of an hour to take breath and breakfast.

Refreshed by this halt, we recommenced our ascent; and for some time the dull and barren surface of the mountain side formed our only prospect though it was somewhat enlivened by the faint gleams of light which illumined the summit, and gave promise of coming day. But if our toils in ascending had been fatiguing and disappointing, the view which burst upon us as we gained the crest of the mountain was so magnificent that it amply repaid all our past inconveniences. Imbedded as it were in a circle of rocks, and surrounded, on every side, by lofty peaks covered with snow, was a lake of water, about a quarter of a mile in length, whose still and placid surface seemed unagitated even by the morning breeze. The sun was just rising, behind the lofty heights that formed the background of the picture, throwing their pure white summits into strong relief by the effulgence with which his coming had overspread the sky beyond them. As he mounted still higher in the heavens, a

gentle and reflected light seemed to play upon the lake, and gradually develop the gentle rippling of its silvery waters, as they felt the sway of the morning air. We all yielded ourselves to the influence of the scene, and for some time remained stationary, gazing at the beautiful lake, and the strange fantastic shapes of the rocks by which it was surrounded.

As we pursued our route, the path became narrow and dangerous. Our horses' steps were but a few inches from the brink of the precipitous gulf which opened at our side, forming, in its deep and secluded bosom, a valley covered with vegetation, through the midst of which a mountain stream was quietly gliding. We continued our journey for some hours along the sides of lofty mountains surrounded by the most glorious mountain scenery imaginable. The sides of the eminences were generally bare, as great quantities of wood are annually collected for the use of the mines at Argana Maaden, to which place we were looking somewhat anxiously forward as the termination of our day's march.

We came upon it rather more suddenly than we expected. Winding round a mountain side, we turned a species of projection, and beheld before us an extensive gorge, near the centre of which was the town of Argana Maaden. It seemed almost buried by the hills that surrounded it, and nothing could convey a more perfect image of seclusion from the world than this collection of houses shut in on all sides by lofty mountains, whose towering peaks appeared to bar even the light of heaven from ingress. Our descent was slow and tiresome, owing to the winding nature of the path. With Argana Maaden in constant view we never seemed to have advanced one step nearer; and when we flattered ourselves with the hope that our conductor was about to take a direct course, we found ourselves balked by some unexpected turn which led us still further about.

But even circuitous roads must have an end, and we were at length comfortably housed in the comfortable habitation of an Armenian merchant, connected with the mines. It seems strange enough for a European to write thus coolly of a process of appropriation, which, however customary in the East, is not exactly accordant with English tastes. Imagine a stranger newly arrived in London quartered on Mr. Rothschild, or Mr. Baring, usurping his best rooms, occupying his *choicest* beds, and sending his servants into his cuisine to

direct culinary matters. Yet in Turkish travel, it is a thing of everyday occurrence, and no Christian at least, however respectable for his wealth and character, can relieve himself from the liability of having his house invaded, and his domestic arrangements disturbed, by the first traveling Frank who requires a lodging, and has influence enough to secure one.

We are now occupying the state apartment of the Armenian merchant's house. It is a long narrow room lined with diwans, raised about a foot from the floor, and amply furnished with soft cushions. Various silken curtains conceal from view recesses fitted up with shelves, on which are deposited mattresses stuffed with wool, sufficient in number to accommodate twenty or thirty people. Our host sends us a smoking pillow from his own table, and treats us with a polite hospitality which, I am sure, we have not deserved. I may be told that he is obliged to receive us—granted, but his kind and courteous deportment was not part of the bond. He might have been surly and ill-tempered, had he so chosen it.

The mines of Argana Maaden produce annually great quantities of copper, which is sent on to Tocat to undergo a refining and purifying process. The mines are under the control of a company of native merchants, who farm the revenues derived from them. A colony of Greeks have been imported here, as they are considered the best workmen in these parts. They are far superior to Armenians and Syrians in intelligence, quickness, and ingenuity. The Armenian is a heavy animal, and the Syrian is indolent, and by no means friendly to exertion. The poor Kurds are the Gibeonites of the Argana Maaden community, and supply them with fuel, for which they get poorly paid.

We left Argana Maaden at 6 A.M., and, four miles distant from the mines, we crossed a tributary stream of the Tigris, not far from its source. That river takes its rise among the mountains which we had just passed. Its sources are seven in number, which are all founded between Argana Maaden and Mush, and unite themselves into one stream not far from the city of Sert, in the eastern part of the Pashalic of Diarbekir.

The descent of the Taurus was difficult and tedious, and we arrived at Argana, wearied and spiritless. The journey of a few miles had occupied nearly four hours, and our

quarters at the latter town were not so comfortable as at the former; but I consoled myself with a chibouque and the never-failing Eastern aphorism of Allah Kerim. There is something depressing in the transition from the wild and magnificent scenery of the mountains to the dead level of a flat and uninteresting plain, where you can see nothing before you for miles but the same unchanging prospect. The grass around us had become completely parched by the sun, whose rays descended on our heads with painful vehemence as we rode along.

Two irregulars had been dispatched with us from Argana Maaden, whose equipments were, as usual, far from satisfactory. The firelock of one was interesting, doubtless, as a relic of antiquity, and would have formed no mean figure in a museum; but its fighting days were clearly over, and its venerable barrel was deeply encrusted with rust. The other irregular carried an ancient scimitar suspended by a piece of cord over his shoulder. The blade and point of his trusty weapon protruded for several inches from the dilapidated scabbard, which seemed to adhere to its companion with a tenacity that rendered perfectly hopeless all ideas of separation. These valiant men-at-arms resembled in their apparel that celebrated company with which Sir John Falstaff declared so stoutly he would not march through Coventry. However, they guarded us in safety to the black tents of Bektash Aga.

We were received courteously at this Kurdish encampment, which was situated about midway between Argana and Diarbekir, on the vast plain bounded on the west by the Euphrates, and on the east by the branch of the Tigris which we had forded on the preceding day.

A large tent was assigned us, divided by a slight screen from the habitation of several rather noisy fowls, who proved finally very troublesome neighbors, as they contrived by some means or other to open a communication with us, and we were rather disagreeably surprised by the entry of two or three members of the feathered family in the course of the evening, who, in performing their evolutions round the tent, generally contrived to extinguish our light.

The Kurds had kindled fires on the heath before their tents, and were busily engaged in preparing the evening meal, when an interruption occurred of no very pleasant nature.

Distant notes of warlike melody came floating on the evening breeze, and soon the outlines of a body of horsemen could be traced wending their way towards the encampment. The chief, doubtless, thought of his anticipated dinner, and desponded. The contents of the great caldron, that had been latterly simmering away with such spirit in front of the great tent, must all go to the coming aga and his hungry train. Nearer and nearer sound the horses' steps, the moon breaks forth from behind a cloud, and discovers a gallant band advancing with a portly figure at their head, whose uniform betokens that he has held, or is still holding, the rank of a pasha. Presently the whole encampment is in an uproar. The poor dinnerless Kurds fly hither and thither to procure forage and refreshment for man and beast; the aga himself, with low and reverential demeanor, holds the stirrup, and assists the great man to dismount, and we learn, after the guests have become somewhat settled in their new quarters, that the late arrival is entitled Osman Pasha, and that he comes from Baghdad to salute the Pasha of Kharpoot, whose triumphal entry into Mezraa we had already witnessed.

On hearing that two Europeans had arrived at the encampment, the pasha condescended to invite us to dinner, an invitation which only my companion accepted, as I had already eaten, and felt more disposed to sleep: he returned in about two hours, well satisfied with his entertainment; but his entrance woke me, and I was not destined again to taste the sweets of slumber. The pasha and his attendants seemed inclined to prolong their revelry, and the sounds of uproarious mirth scared away sleep from my eyes; I lay tossing about on my mattress in vain. At length, they broke out with a song, the burden of which, as far as I can recollect, was "Chimbel bam, chimbel bam." It seemed very comic, for shouts of laughter hailed each refrain, "Chimbel bam, chimbel bam." I closed my ears in desperation, but the sound would creep in; even when the singer was silent, and the noise gradually died away, the echo of that strain rang in my hearing still. As I dozed off in uneasy slumbers, "Chimbel bam" seemed present with me. It appeared almost to change from a sound to a form, and to bestride me like a nightmare. I could not account for it then, I can hardly do so now; but the first words I caught myself repeating on the morrow were "Chimbel bam."

The Kurds of Bektash Aga had formerly been robbers, and their chief had only lately sent in his adhesion to the government. Perhaps this circumstance led him to treat his visitor from Baghdad with such marked respect. He performed for him the offices of a menial, held his horse, and served him at dinner with the assiduity of a humble dependent. A few months may see a quarrel arise between the Pasha of Diarbekir and his feudatories, Bektash Aga and his tribe will once more become robbers, and woe betide Osman Pasha if he falls into their hands; they will make him bring sticks to boil their caldron, and that fine French watch, which he displayed with so much ostentation before dinner, will soon find its way into the custody of the Jews.

Osman Pasha and his train have taken their departure, and we purpose to pursue our journey in the opposite direction. The road lies through a flat uncultivated plain, varied now and then by slight undulations. Barrenness and desolation are around us, and we ride along, each with his head enveloped in the cowl of his capote, till aroused by the announcement that Diarbekir is in sight; we lift up our eyes, and perceive a well-fortified town, with walls built of black stone, and well garnished with formidable towers. This is the ancient Amida, or Amid, called also Kara, or Black Amid, from the color of its walls. It was one of the most opulent and populous of the Mesopotamian cities during the time of Constantine and his successors, though it suffered severely from the invasions of the Persians. Abulfeda characterizes it as an ancient city of the province of Diarbekir, situated on the western bank of the Tigris, abounding in trees and shrubs. Another writer tells us that it is a splendid city, possessing a magnificent citadel, and great store of provisions, surrounded by walls of immense strength constructed of black stones, over which neither iron nor fire has any power.

The appearance of the place from the outside seemed to justify and support the descriptions which I have just quoted. The compactness and solidity of the walls presented a striking contrast to the mean and dilapidated fortifications of other towns that we had passed, and the state of the towers and gates seemed to lead us to expect that we should find the interior less squalid and filthy than the interiors of Eastern cities usually are; but the anticipations we had formed, as we contemplated the well-built walls and bulwarks, were

speedily dissipated, as we entered the narrow streets, and inhaled the abominable odors which proceeded from them. Nearly half of the houses were in ruins, the thoroughfares seemed deserted, and a few wretched, half-naked outcasts were contending with each other for the possession of a few melon rinds covered with filth, which a passer-by had cast carelessly away.

They scarcely heeded us as we rode past, and we shuddered with surprise and disgust, as we marked their gaunt features, bodies attenuated by famine, and the wild looks in which the pain of physical suffering was fearfully mingled with the semi-madness of despair.

We were assigned lodgings in the house of a Syrian Catholic, and, after a brief interval of rest and refreshment, we sallied forth to pay a visit to a Syrian deacon, for whom my companion had received letters from a bishop of that communion at Constantinople.

We found this gentleman seated in the court of his house in company with the ex-bishop of Kharpoot, Mar Georgios, who was then making a short stay at Diarbekir. The bishop was a good-looking man, of middle stature, clothed in the dark robes of his order, and possessing a countenance less dignified than good-natured. The deacon was a man of about forty years of age, clad in the usual costume of merchants and tradesmen. As the wakeel, or agent of the patriarch, he possessed great influence over the Jacobite Syrians of Diarbekir; the more so, perhaps, because no bishop was appointed to it, it having been considered from early times as part of the diocese of the patriarch himself.

The office of deacon in the Greek, Roman, and English churches has commonly been considered as an ecclesiastical grade preparatory to the priesthood, and possessing the least possible amount of authority or influence; those who hold it are generally persons who have devoted themselves entirely to the ministerial office, and have totally separated themselves from every secular pursuit. But the diaconate of the Syrian Jacobites has assumed a widely different character, inasmuch as its members are usually engaged in traffic, and possess a greater amount of wealth and influence than the priests or bishops, their ecclesiastical superiors. The number of deacons attached to each church is very considerable, sometimes exceeding thirty; and it is difficult to meet a respectable or

well-educated Syrian who has not been advanced to this primary grade among the church's officers. Few comparatively enter the priestly office, as their canons require, like our own, a total renunciation of worldly pursuits. From the peculiar character of the Syrian diaconate, it generally follows that its members are among the most able and respectable of their community. Their connection with the church induces them to study its theology and its history, while their commerce obliges them to mix with the world, to travel, and to observe, and thus generates habits of greater activity; and opinions of more practical utility than those possessed by their bishops and priests, who are drawn chiefly from the seclusion and inexperience of the cloister to discharge their serious and important duties.

Theology is the grand theme of Oriental discourse, and both the bishop and the deacon were anxious to understand the nature, rites, and doctrines of the English Church. Like most of the Oriental Christians, they seemed scarcely to be aware of our belief in the Gospel, and were disposed to confound us with the American Presbyterians, whose missionary had lately passed through the town. Of the doctrines of the latter they had gathered a confused notion from the tracts which had at various times been distributed, translated into Arabic and other languages; but they seemed to view the dogmas of Calvinism with no great favor.

At their request, we consented to take luncheon with them on the morrow, to meet some of the most wealthy and influential laymen of the Syrian community; we then strolled through the town, which we found did not improve upon acquaintance, and directed our footsteps to the Greek church.

It was a small but not inelegant structure, circular in form and surmounted by a dome. The screen was furnished with the usual quota of gaudy and ill-executed paintings, and the church was dirty and badly ventilated. We found here the sepulchres of SS. Cosmas and Damianus, whose names are well known to the ecclesiastical antiquary, from their frequent recurrence in the earlier liturgies, and particularly in the canon of the Roman mass.

They were, says the legend, two Christian brothers, who lived in the reign of the Emperor Diocletian. Educated in the strictest principles of piety by their devout mother, *Theodora*, they were remarkable even at an early age for their

numerous acts of charity and benevolence. Taking a literal view of the precepts of Christ, they disposed of all their property and distributed the produce among the poor. That they might be more useful, they studied medicine, that they might minister to the afflictions of the sick and suffering. By persevering diligence they acquired an almost superhuman knowledge of the art of healing, which they used only for the benefit of their fellow-creatures, utterly refusing all recompense for their skill. Their virtues attracted many to Christianity, and marked them as a prey to its enemies. During the persecution which Diocletian and Maximian excited against the church, the two brethren were apprehended and dragged before the proconsul, who offered to their choice the dreadful alternative of death or apostacy; as may well be imagined, they cheerfully chose the former, and sentence having been pronounced, they were beheaded in the presence of a vast multitude, confirming, by the constancy with which they suffered, the truth of that faith which the charity and devotion of their lives had so nobly illustrated.

A marble slab covers the bodies of the saints, bearing on its surface a plain cross in bas-relief. There was a kind of aperture near the edge of the tomb, through which it is said a miraculous oil oozes forth on the festival of the saints. This oil, which is supposed to issue from the bodies within, is highly esteemed as a remedy for all kinds of sickness; it is collected in bottles, and disposed of to the Greeks of the province, who have full faith in its virtue.

The priest told us that his congregation was now reduced to ten or twelve, as the great majority had joined the Greek Catholics, or members of the Greek Church in communion with Rome; the seceders were gaining ground every day, and had a bishop just appointed over them.

The progress which the Church of Rome is making, in winning over the members of the Oriental churches to acknowledge her supremacy, and to submit to her jurisdiction, will affect different minds in various ways. By the devout adherent of the See of Rome it will be regarded as the triumph of truth over error and heresy; while those who deem the pretensions of that see alike opposed to reason and Scripture will feel sorrow that the long maintained independence of the Orientals is slowly, but surely, yielding to usurpation. Yet, whatever effect it may produce on his mind,

no candid observer of the course of events can, for an instant, deny that the Roman interest is gaining rapidly in these parts, and that, ere long, as far as human foresight can foretell the future, the pontiff of the seven-hilled city will add the patriarchs and bishops of the East to the long list of his tributaries.

But there are circumstances mixed up with these triumphs of Romanism which may excite the attention of the statesman, as well as the consideration of the divine. The See of Rome is not single-handed in the conflict; she is aided and sustained by the political power of France. Every French official is more or less, as far as a layman can be, a missionary of the Roman See. The missions are everywhere considered as enjoying French protection. Do they embroil themselves with the government? The French consul steps forward as their champion. Are they engaged in litigation with a rival sect? French influence is thrown into the scale. Nor is this line of conduct on the part of France a novelty or accident; it dates from the days of Louis XIV., and has been pursued with steadiness and consistency by monarchical, imperial, consular, and republican governments.—France directs the Christians of the East, through the medium of the Roman missionaries, and in the case of the downfall of the Turkish empire, she will find warm and energetic partisans in those Christians of the East who have yielded obedience to the supremacy of Rome.

Her only rival in the affections of the Orientals is Russia, and Russia meddles only with the Greeks. But the Greek clergy are ignorant, and without influence, while the Propaganda is continually training, and sending forth young Orientals, prepared by the advantages of a European education to take the lead among their countrymen. By these means the adherents of the papacy maintain a visible superiority over the other Christians. The former are better dressed, they have more intelligence, their churches and their houses are cleaner, and more elegant. They are better protected from the violence and caprice of the government, for they have always the French consul to resort to. The sovereignty of Rome in the East seems indeed inevitable.

On the following day, according to promise, we repaired to the house of the Syrian deacon, Daood, where we found the bishop and the leading men of the body assembled.—



Glasses of liqueur were handed round before luncheon, and each guest drank five or six, to sharpen the appetite. The cloth was laid on the floor, and upon it was placed a small round table of ebony, inlaid with ivory. We all surrounded it, and covered our knees with the white cloth. The posture was most unpleasant to those who had not been accustomed to sit cross-legged; but our Syrian friends were, of course, quite at their ease. The lunch was a substantial one, and comprised ragouts of various kinds, soup, pillaw, and leben. The repast wound up with a supply of delicious fruit. I must not omit to mention that the bishop pronounced a long grace in Syriac, which was devoutly listened to, every one giving a hearty Amen, and crossing themselves at the conclusion.

After we had finished our repast, we went to look at the church. It was a large building, very dirty, and abounding in tawdry decorations. On each side of the great altar were two smaller ones, on one of which the elements are placed before consecration. The other marks the place where the priest is to robe himself for the service. There were no seats, but the floor was covered with matting as in a mosque, on which the congregation sat cross-legged, when not standing or kneeling. The altar of the Syrians is a square table, either of wood or stone, generally the latter, raised upon three steps. It is surmounted by a cross, on each side of which is a candlestick, holding a short wax candle, which is lighted only when the liturgy is recited. The vestments of the priests resemble somewhat those of the Greek Church.—The Syrian clergy may marry while in deacons' orders, but not afterwards.

We found several pictures in the church, but they did not seem to attract any veneration, and, as far as execution is concerned, were certainly not deserving of it. One of these daubs represented the day of judgment, and a more perfect burlesque of an awful and serious subject could hardly be imagined. A very truculent-looking angel was busily engaged, with a pair of balances, in weighing souls. A large pit at the corner emitted flames and smoke, and received into its yawning jaws a number of men and women, who were writhing under the agonies inflicted by a number of three pronged tridents, wielded by black figures with horns, hoofs, and tails, one of whom was bearing a man in triumph, on

the top of his fork. In another compartment of the picture, the artists had portrayed seven infants, in a gloomy and dismal kind of a place, which seemed to be a species of cavern and was expounded to us as a representation of the state of unbaptized children. Various portraits of saints embellished the walls, all looking very grim, and void of expression, so that, upon the whole, we could not compliment the Apelles of Diarbekir on his proficiency in art.

We took a friendly leave of our Syrian friends, and returned home to prepare for the next day's journey. The governor was kind enough to order the gates of the town to be opened at an early hour, and it was nearly dark when we took our farewell look at Amida the black.

CHAPTER VIII.

Kurdish village and people. Turkish oppression. The skull. Syrian bishop. The monastery of Zaphran. Library and manuscripts. Armenian banker. Nisibin and its traditions. Tomb of St. James. Jezirah.

SHORTLY after we had left the gates of Diarbekir, we forded the Tigris in two places, and pursued our route over stony hills, covered, here and there, with patches of vegetation. Turkish now ceases to be the vernacular of the towns and villages, but gives way to Arabic and Kurdish. The latter, however, seems to predominate in the villages, as they are chiefly inhabited by settlers from the neighboring mountains. We arrived at one of these Kurdish villages about mid-day, but found very sorry accommodation, as it had just been visited, and, of course, plundered by the Albanians of the pasha. Most of the inhabitants had taken to flight, and the others intended to follow their example, for they frankly avowed that it was impossible to sustain any longer the grinding tyranny of the Turkish officials.

The Kurdish character is one that has been plentifully laden with execration, and it must be avowed that their savage ferocity in war can admit neither of excuse nor palliation. Yet I have seldom experienced more cordial welcome, or more genuine hospitality, than I have received at

the hands of these half-civilized mountaineers. As a nation, they possess a bold independence of character, and an entire freedom from the low servility and its attendant vices which disgrace and degrade the greater portion of the vassals of Turkish oppression. Divided into clans or tribes, they submit cheerfully to the patriarchal authority of the chieftain, an authority which seldom exceeds the limits of a just and paternal rule; individual liberty is unfettered by the numerous restrictions with which, under the Turkish regimen, the cruelty or caprice of numberless petty tyrants has restrained the enterprise, and blasted the industry, of their unfortunate Rayahs. Yet the mountains, which nurse the rude independence of the mountaineer, are barren and incapable of affording him, to any extent, the means of supporting his freedom.

The desire of providing for his own wants, and for those of his family, drives him down to the more fertile and fruitful plains whose rich soil and luxuriant harvests are marred by the tyranny of those who rule over them. The unhappy wanderer finds to his cost that the mild and genial temperature which forms so pleasing and so marked a contrast to the cold chilling blasts of his native mountains, is an atmosphere of slavery, whose zephyrs fan not the limbs, and refresh not the toils of the free. Hardly have the unfortunate Kurd and his companions completed the rude huts of their village colony, and sown their little crop, when the stern exactions of a relentless pasha apprise them that they must not expect to labor for themselves. The harvest is plenteous, perhaps; but three parts of it, at least, find their way into the garners of a governor whose grasping avarice is too intent upon present gain to perceive that, by oppression, it is destroying the source of future profit. The inhabitants of the village murmur and pay, but, after several repetitions of the same conduct, they begin to grow weary of a system which holds out no hope or encouragement to honest industry. They become idle and disinclined to labor, and sigh in the midst of oppression for the former independence of their mountain home. The pasha's exactions increase as the means to satisfy them fail, and the wretched cultivators find, at last, that they have no alternative between a sudden flight and torture or insult from the Albanian myrmidons of the pasha.

Sometimes, when the villagers are numerous, and possess

arms, they resolutely set the tyrant at defiance, and break out into open rebellion against his authority. Troops are sent against them, and, if successful, they rarely leave many survivors in the rebellious district. Men, women, and children are put to the sword indiscriminately, and their ears, strung together on small cords, are suspended at the principal gate of the chief city of the province, as a warning to those who may feel disposed hereafter to question the pasha's right of exaction, or to refuse submission to his legalized robbery. Should the villagers, however, be fortunate enough to escape before the ministers of vengeance can arrest their flight, they usually betake themselves either to the mountains or to some deserted part of the province, where they subsist chiefly by plunder. Yet even in this case, they are liable continually to be pursued and hunted down by the Albanians, and they learn, by sad and fatal experience, that from Turkish tyranny there is no sure and certain refuge but the grave.

The political quidnuncs of London and Paris may extol the advancing liberality of the Turkish government, its Hatti Sherifs, and very lately manifested humane anxiety for the lives and liberties of its subjects; but these fair-seeming professions are confined, as far as regards their actual fruits, to the immediate vicinity of the capital. The peasant of the interior is still pillaged, insulted, and oppressed by governors, who regard a province solely as a source of individual profit, and endeavor to lay up a sufficient store against the day of dismissal or disgrace. The Porte still disposes of its employments, and encourages the peculations of its agents, by the ruinous and unjust demands which it makes upon them. The laws of the empire may be in themselves reasonable and just, but what is law when the executive has the power of superseding it by an act of arbitrary will? In every Turkish province, the pasha is the law.

About three hours' journey from Mardin, we passed the boundary of the province of Diarbekir, and entered that of Mosul. Our road lay through an uneven plain, at the termination of which rose abruptly the eminence on whose southern brow the town of Mardin is situated. For some miles before we arrived at the foot of the mountain, we could discern the distant outline of the citadel, which crowned the highest visible summit. A chain of rocky hills wound off to

the eastward, and curving round in a southerly direction, bore down towards the desert of Sinjar.

The city of Mardin is built on the sloping brow of a mountain, which is commonly considered as claiming some alliance with Mount Masius, though the connection between them does not appear to be distinctly defined. As the traveler crosses the summit of the eminence, and begins to descend into the town, a prospect of boundless extent opens before him. To the south and west he beholds a vast expanse of plains terminated only by the horizon, and formed into a species of delta by the rivers Euphrates and Khabur. Here Mesopotamia may be said truly to commence, and its general features, as described by Xenophon, appear even at this day strikingly correct.

The eye of the traveler seeks in vain for the green forests and agreeable shades of Northern Asia, such as he passed during the former part of his journey by the banks of the limpid Iris. In their stead, dwarf-bushes and the scanty foliage of the olive and palm will occasionally relieve inadequately the general monotony of Mesopotamian scenery. The dull, tame level of the plain eschews the bold and sublime grandeurs of Pontus and Cappadocia; and the wayfarer feels, as he gazes over the widely-extending flats, that he will speedily bid adieu for some time to mountains. Yet the hand of Nature, which has denied the more splendid and striking features of creation, has liberally bestowed what, perhaps, is more in itself conducive to the happiness and comfort of existence. The fertility and richness of the Mesopotamian plains have, from early ages, been celebrated in history, and even at the present day the blessings of an ever-teeming soil seem to compensate for the violence and spoliation which is the lot of the husbandman. Yet thousands of acres remain untended and uncultivated. The population decreases annually, and the time may speedily be anticipated when the miseries of Turkish rule will have reduced the once plentiful and fruitful land of the two rivers into a barren and desolate wilderness, as frightful and terrific in its desolation as that which surrounds the last relics of proud and haughty Babylon.

The citadel of Mardin is celebrated by Abulfeda as one of the strongest fortresses in Mesopotamia. He mentions a singular race of serpents to be found near the summit of the mountain, which exceeded all others in ferocity and venom.

It was not, however, my ill fortune to meet with any of them.

The town itself seemed to have a tolerable share of ruined habitations. As we ascended the narrow streets that led to our appointed quarters, my horse stumbled over some round substance which lay near a heap of rubbish on the ground. One of the servants touched it with his stick. It was a human skull, and, with several others that we perceived in different corners of the street, had served as a football for the idle boys. These sad mementos of persecuted humanity had been brought in some days before by the governor's troops, who had been lately making a foray against some neighboring villages.

We were rescued from our uncomfortable quarters at the post-house, where we had been assigned lodgings, by the hospitable invitation sent us by Khowajeh Murad, the Armenian banker of the pasha. This gentleman was polite enough to dispatch horses to convey us through the town to his residence, which was situated in one of the highest parts of the city, and commanded a fine view of the plains below.

We had scarcely changed our traveling dresses and performed our ablutions, when a visitor was announced in the person of Bishop Matthew, a Syrian Jacobite prelate, from the neighboring convent of Zaphian. The reason of his visit was soon explained. B—— had sent on in the morning some letters from a Syrian bishop with whom we had been very intimate at Constantinople. Just as we were alighting, we received, by way of reply, an invitation to the convent, worded, however, in such a cold and apparently unfriendly manner, that we judged it best not to accept it. Bishop Matthew had come, therefore, to explain, and account for the seeming reserve of his community. The patriarch, he said, was absent, and some members of their body looked upon the English with dislike and suspicion. He hoped, however, that we would not leave Mardin without visiting the monastery. He had himself just returned from a tour among the Syrian villages near the Euphrates, and had seen in one of them an illuminated MS. of the entire Scriptures, in Syriac, of great antiquity, and much revered by the people. It had been thrown into the Euphrates by the Turks, and had been rescued with great difficulty. The bishop was anxious

to purchase it for the patriarch's library, but the villagers refused to part with it at any price.

The bishop then entered at some length into a description of the present condition of his people. Some of them, he said, who had traveled and conversed with the American missionaries, were desirous of promoting a reformation in the usages and doctrines of the Syrian community; these were opposed by those who formed the majority of the body, and whose views were of a strictly conservative character. A third party was considered as favoring the pretensions of Rome, though as yet no actual separation had taken place between them and their brethren. Bishop Matthew was himself disposed to forward the tendencies of the reforming party, though he described their views as undefined, and verging in some individuals towards ultra-liberalism. Of the second class he spoke with much contempt, as of men who had neither reason nor Scripture on their side, but were actuated solely by a blind reverence for the practices of their fathers, and a superstitious fear of change. He gave the Papal Syrians credit for activity, energy, and zeal, though it was easy to see that he viewed their success with regret, and even positive enmity. Having obtained from us a promise that we would visit the monastery on the following day, he took his leave.

The next morning, we set forth from Mardin to pay the promised visit. We descended the mountain on which the city is built, and then began to ascend the side of another eminence, after which we came to a valley surrounded on almost every part with rocks. Leaving this secluded spot, which would have served admirably for a hermitage, we passed a mountain stream, and soon after arrived at the foot of an isolated rocky hill, on the summit of which was the monastery, resembling strongly in its external appearance rather the fort or stronghold of a band of robbers than the abode of pious meditation and peace. The vicinity of the Kurds, however, rendered it desirable that due precautions should be taken, as these wild people, though ignorant in the extreme, are bigoted fanatics, and apt to esteem the sacking of a monastery, and the murder of Christian ecclesiastics, as actions of supererogatory virtue.

The interior of the monastery seemed to promise well, in the event of a siege, and the ramparts were certainly stout

enough to bid defiance to the rude and ill managed artillery of the Kurds. The various offices of the establishment, the chapel, and the habitations of the monks, were grouped in a straggling way around a court of extensive dimensions. In the chapel, which was dedicated to St. Eugenius, we saw a kind of case or tabernacle, bearing some verses engraved upon it from the Gospel of St. Matthew, in the Estranglo character, which was said to have been consecrated by St. Peter, at Antioch, and from him was transmitted to the patriarchs of that city. Near the altar we noticed the fans, or screens of silver, which are used by most of the Oriental churches during the celebration of the eucharist; they are consigned to the deacon, who waves them to and fro over the altar to drive away the flies and other insects, which, in these warm climates, are likely to be attracted to the sacred elements.

From the chapel we proceeded to visit the library of the monastery, which seemed to meet with little attention from the inmates. After descending some stone stairs, a rusty bunch of keys was produced, and with a little difficulty the door was opened, and the venerable tomes appeared, some piled up in a corner, and others scattered in careless confusion about the floor. They were all manuscripts; but our monkish friends could not, or would not, give us much information respecting them. They said that the chronicles and some other of the works of Bar Hebræus were among their collection, and likewise several volumes of a species of diary, in which it is customary for each patriarch to record the principal events of his patriarchate.

We now ascended to the reception room of the monastery, a long narrow apartment, fitted up with diwans, and having a species of platform at the upper end, on which the patriarch and dignitaries of the monastery usually sat. The tables were brought up, and, after the customary preface of several glasses of rakee, we were regaled with a substantial lunch, after which, pipes and coffee having been duly discussed, we mounted our horses and returned to the house of our kind host Murad.

Some of the principal Christians of the town had assembled at the board of our hospitable friend. We found, when we descended into the drawing-room, that he had procured for us a long table, furnished in the European fashion, and his *guests*, in compliment doubtless to the Frank strangers,

omitted their usual custom of eating with their fingers. Knives and forks were laid for each, and, though our companions' mode of handling utensils so new to them might have provoked a smile, yet they succeeded, perhaps, much better than a party of Europeans would have done, had they been deprived of the long-accustomed implements of feeding, and required to confine themselves to their fingers.

The conversation at table was strictly local. The doings of the governor, the last expedition of the Albanians, the state of the roads, and the changes in the ecclesiastical departments of their several churches, were the topics that engaged principally the attention of the guests. To the recital of the wonders of Europe they listened with surprise and suspicion. Railroads and balloons, though prosaic and matter-of-fact to us, were to them as romantic and poetical as the tales of the Thousand and One are in our eyes. They bestowed upon our relations an equal share of attention and credence to that usually accorded by the audience of a Turkish coffee house to the story of the Wonderful Lamp.

On the morrow, we took our departure from Mardin, and bade adieu, with some regret, to our worthy friend and entertainer, Khowajeh Murad. As we rode down the steep descent which leads from the town into the plain, I could not help meditating on the precarious character of our late host's position. The banker of a Turkish governor is an individual who realizes, in his every-day life, what the old classic story relates of Damocles. For a time, he revels in luxury and pleasure. A splendid mansion, a magnificent stud are his. As long as the pasha's coffers are full, all is well; but every consideration of *meum* and *tuum* must disappear when his excellency wants money. The unfortunate banker finds some morning, to his great dismay, that the debtor and creditor sides of the account-book have, as it were by magic, changed places; and that, instead of receiving a large sum from his highness, he is expected to pay it. If he is wise, he will bend his head to the storm, and acquiesce in his loss with an expression of thankfulness that it was not greater; but if his confidence in the justice of his cause, and unwillingness to submit to imposition get the better of his discretion, he will probably soon exchange his luxurious mansion for a cold and damp prison, from whence, after suffering all the agony and torture that a tyrant's baffled cupidity can in-

flict, he will depart a ruined and impoverished man, if death do not kindly forestall his deliverance and liberate him at an earlier period from his torments.

Our route from Mardin to Nisibin lay over a flat, uncultivated plain, keeping to our left the range of rocky hills, known anciently by the name of Mount Masius, near the foot of which was formerly situated the ancient city of Nisibis. On arriving at its modern representative, we found a miserable collection of mud huts grouped together on the banks of the river Jakh Jakah, the ancient Mygdonius. The present inhabitants of Nisibis number about three hundred families. Some ragged tents were pitched near the huts, tenanted by wandering Arabs.

Less than a quarter of a mile from the village, stands a monument of ancient times, which we examined with great interest. Its architecture is Grecian, but of the depraved style of the Lower Empire. It consists of two apartments, which are nearly filled with rubbish and ruins, so that we could hardly work our way to a staircase leading to the subterranean cell, in which, entombed in a marble sarcophagus, repose, it is said, the ashes of St. James of Nisibis. Near one of the entrances into the building we found the following inscription, much defaced :

ΑΝΗΤΕΙΝ ΤΟΝ ΤΙΣ ΜΗΡΙΟΝ ΤΟΥ
 ΕΛΕΓΕΝ ΜΟΥ ΣΑΟΧ ΕΝ ΧΡΟ
 Ι-Ι-Ι-Ι-Ι-Ι ΕΣΟΥ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥΣ
 ΠΟΥΔΗ ΑΚΕ
 ΥΥΩ ΑΠΡΕΥΤΕ ΟΥ ΠΕΝΗΤΕΛΥΠΩΝ
 ΠΙΟΝ ΤΟΥ
 ΝΕΝΗ
 ΟΥΤ

The Mohammedans hold this building in great veneration, as they do the tombs of all Christian saints who lived before the birth of Mohammed ; but the cause of their reverence for this particular building was somewhat singular. One of the late pashas of the province erected some large barracks near Nisibis, and determined to transform the ruined mausoleum of St. James into a magazine for straw. The plans had been drawn up, and the architect was prepared to com-

mence his work on the following day, when, early in the morning, he was summoned hastily to the presence of the pasha, who charged him, on the strictest penalties, to forbear from touching the building. The astonished builder asked the reason of this change in his excellency's intentions, and was informed that during the night he had been visited by revelations of a most awful nature, in the course of which he was strictly forbidden to meddle with the mausoleum. Shortly after, he made an offer to the Syrian patriarch at Mardin to rebuild the church, and make it fit for divine service at his own expense, if the patriarch would send a colony of Syrians and a priest to Nisibin : while, however, the negotiation was pending, the pasha was deposed, and the whole project fell to the ground.

A former governor, it is said, presumed to stable a favorite mare in one of the apartments of the building, and the next morning she was found dead without any assignable cause. These accounts were given us, it must be observed, by Mohammedans, who knew nothing of St. James beyond his name, and they were amply corroborated by the Christians.

What renders, perhaps, these legends the more remarkable is the fact that they refer to one who, during his lifetime, was connected with some most singular and well-authenticated circumstances which occurred during the siege of Nisibis by the Persians.* The account of them is as follows :—

In A. D. 350, Sapor, King of Persia, one of the most warlike and successful monarchs of his day, determined to invade the territories of the Romans, and, if possible, to surprise the strong city of Nisibis, one of the most formidable garrisons on the Roman frontier. He laid siege to it with a large army, and the men of Nisibis gave themselves up for lost, for the Emperor Constantius was then at Antioch, and many a long and weary march was necessary before he

* My relation is taken from the statements of Theodoret, lib. ii. cap. 30. Philostorgius, an Arian historian, lib. iii. sec. 23, alludes to the siege of Nisibis and repulse of Sapor in the following terms : " Sapor, King of the Persians, marched an army against Nisibis, and having in form besieged it, was in a strange and unexpected manner obliged to retreat shamefully. For James, the bishop of the city, having instructed the inhabitants in what was necessary to be done, by his trust in God defended the town in a wonderful manner."

could succor them, or even hear of their danger. At that time, St. James was Bishop of Nisibis, and he exhorted the citizens to defend themselves valiantly, promising them at the same time the aid of his prayers. And night and day, as long as the beleaguering host lay around the walls of Nisibis, might St. James have been seen in the great church, interceding for the city and its inhabitants.

The Persians made many attacks, which were bravely repulsed; but at last they succeeded in effecting a breach by the curious expedient of collecting, by means of dams, a great body of water together, and then letting it loose against the town. A vast torrent was thus precipitated with impetuous fury against the walls, and laid a considerable portion of them level with the ground. The Persians determined to march in the next day, and passed the night in feasting and revelry. But in the morning, as they were about to occupy the breach, a strange and novel sight arrested their attention. A new wall had been hastily thrown up by the inhabitants during the night, and on this stood a person of tall stature, clad in robes of purple, and bearing a coronet on his head. He was surrounded by attendants, and seemed to be giving directions. But so stern and fearful was his glance, as he gazed in wrath at the Persian host, that the boldest soldier trembled as he looked upon him.

Then Sapor declared, "Verily, it is the Emperor of the Romans that hath brought succor to the town." But his courtiers whispered together, and they said at last, "O king, the Emperor Constantius is indeed at Antioch, and the person whom thou seest is one more than mortal." Then Sapor hurled his javelin in anger against the walls, and retired in moody silence to his tent. And, as the Persian host withdrew themselves from their posts, the Bishop St. James gazed down upon them from the ramparts, and he pronounced the curse of the Lord upon them. A short interval elapsed, when an immense swarm of flies appeared in the west. They passed over the city, but attacked with fury the Persian camp, stinging men, elephants, and horses, and scattering confusion and dismay wherever they alighted. Terrified at what had happened, the Persian king commanded the tents to be struck, and with great haste recrossed the Tigris.

The name Nisibin, corrupted by Greek writers into Nisibis, *is supposed* to be the same as the Chaldean נִיבִין, which sig-

nifies military stations or garrisons. Arabian geographers consider it as the capital of the province of Diar Rabyah, and entitle the river on whose bank it stands the Hirmas, or Hir-masius. The Macedonians, however, called the latter stream Mygdonius, and changed the name of Nisibin to Antiochia Mygdonia. In the time of Abulfeda, it seems to have been a town of some magnitude. He depicts it as surrounded with gardens, in which only white roses could be grown, and as producing a species of scorpion whose sting was followed by instantaneous death.

To the south of Nisibis extend the desert regions known by the name of Sinjar, the Singara of the Romans. The range called Mount Masius has probably some connection with the hills of Sinjar, which are inhabited chiefly by Yezidees. The traveler to Mosul has here the choice of two routes. That by Jezirah is the longest, but supplies more plentiful accommodations and provisions, while the road by the desert occupies less time, but presents no convenient halting-place, and is infested with banditti. We therefore judged it advisable, as we had laid in no supplies, to journey by way of Jezirah.

Accordingly, we skirted the northern extremity of the desert of Sinjar, traveling through a rocky and barren country, having to the south the mountains called Jebel Tor, which are chiefly inhabited by Syrian Jacobites. We passed several villages, but encountered nothing of interest till the next day, when we came in sight of Jebel Judi, which rises abruptly from the eastern bank of the Tigris, and almost overlooks the town of Jezirah.

We arrived at the latter place in the afternoon, two days after leaving Nisibis, and were not a little disappointed to find that there were scarcely twenty tenable habitations in the whole town. With much trouble, the Tatar succeeded in gaining us lodgings in the house of two Kurdish females, who screamed and cursed the infidels most fluently, when they were informed that we were to be billeted on them. To add to my troubles, B——, who had been ailing ever since we left Nisibis, fairly gave in at Jezirah, and the only room that could be got for him was a kind of dilapidated shed exposed on all sides to the chilling breezes, which, as the winter season was coming on, blew harsh and biting from the neighboring mountains. Fortunately, however, we possessed a medicine chest, and a female professor of the heal-

ing art in the town, by religion a Chaldean Christian, having heard that a sick Englishman had arrived, came and tendered her services.

The good lady had, it seems, a considerable and lucrative practice among both Mohammedans and Christians, and was considered very skillful in her mode of treatment. She looked at B—— with great attention, felt his pulse, inspected his tongue, and went through the usual evolutions of her profession, after which she recommended bleeding; B—— followed her advice, and the next day was much better.

Leaving him asleep, I rambled out on the banks of the Tigris, which here flows with its wonted rapidity. On the opposite side, were the tall and commanding heights of Jebel Judi, along which the gallant ten thousand had fought their way in days of yore. To the westward of the river, a barren and rocky plain extended itself as far as the eye could see. The water of the river seemed muddy and disturbed, being in color a kind of dirty red. I drank some of it, but did not detect any evidence of its superior qualities, so much vaunted by the dwellers in these regions. I learnt afterwards, at Mosul, that it should be kept standing for some time in pitchers, before it was used, in order to allow the sediment to sink to the bottom.



CHAPTER IX.

Kurdistan. Derivation of the word Kurd. Resting-place of the ark. Mosul. Houses. Climate. Ana Gholamuk. Chaldean servant. The Yezidee. Bagh Sheikha. Yezidee host. Syrian priest. An Oriental's account of England and the English.

THE region to which the name of Kurdistan has been generally assigned comprises the narrow tract of mountainous country which separates Persia from Turkey. The long ranges of rocky eminences are divided from each other by fertile valleys, where the numerous flocks find pasture during the warm and temperate seasons of the year. Yet the general character of the inhospitable soil has forced the hardy inhabitants of these mountains to migrate to the plains,

sometimes as peaceful cultivators, but not unfrequently as armed marauders, like the ancient Highlanders of Scotland. Their hardy valor, no less than their savage ferocity, has made the name of Kurd terrible throughout the East; and the rugged mountains of ancient Assyria may boast of having sent forth one of the greatest of Eastern conquerors, the celebrated Salaheddin, better known, perhaps, under his Latinized appellation of Saladdin.

The Arabian philologists tell us that the Kurds are of Persian origin, and were expelled from Iran during the reign of the tyrannical Zohauk. They assert that the exiles derive their name of Kurd from the root كـر, he drove forth or persecuted, from which the Greek geographers and historians formed their Carduchia and Carduchi. It is probable that the national name of Kord or Gord is very ancient, as we find traces of it not only in the appellation given by Xenophon to the inhabitants of the mountains, but also in the title assigned by early writers to the mountains themselves. Berosus speaks of them as ὄρη, τῶν κορδυαίων—which the Latin authors render *Montes Gordyæorum*,* a name bearing a strong affinity to the word كـرد, Kord or Gord, as the sounds K and G are frequently interchanged in Semetic languages.

My object in dwelling thus upon an etymology, which to some may seem to involve inferences of but little consequence, will appear when I come to analyze the ancient opinion that the ark of Noah rested, after the deluge, upon the mountains of Armenia. For several reasons, I consider the common notion that the Ararat of modern Armenia is the place indicated by Scripture, as founded on error, and as incompatible with the narrative of what followed the deliverance of the second founder of the human race.

One glance at the map of Asia will show the extreme improbability that the descendants of Noah should have journeyed in the direction of Babylon, over the rude and rugged mountains which intervene between Ararat and the Assyrian plains. Their route would rather have been towards the fertile country of Persia; and Iran, and not Shinar, would have been recorded as the first colony of the human race.

* Apud Joseph. Ant., lib. i. cap. 4.

Nor is the opinion which assigns the Ararat of Armenia as the resting-place of the ark at all supported either by the literal interpretation of Scripture, or by the testimony of accredited writers. The term Ararat is used in Hebrew to signify the mountainous country to the north and east of Assyria. In 2 Kings xix. 37, and Isaiah xxxvii. 38, we are told that the sons of Sennacherib, having assassinated their father, fled for refuge into the land of Ararat, or Armenia, as our translators render it, following the rendering of the Septuagint and Vulgate. Can it be supposed, then, that the fugitives would traverse the mountains of Kurdistan, as far as the modern peak of Ararat, or that men, bred up in the luxury and effeminacy of the Assyrian court, would advance one step further in a barbarous, and almost inaccessible region, than was absolutely needful for their safety? We are compelled, therefore, to allow that the term Ararat must be taken as indicating the mountainous country in the vicinity of Nineveh, the same, in fact, which is known at the present day by the name of Jebel Giodi, or Judi, an evident corruption of the ancient Gordi.*

This supposition derives much additional weight from the authority of the Targumist Jonathan, who, in his gloss upon Genesis viii. 4, makes the ark to rest, על טורי דקירון *al toorai d'Kardon*, upon the mountains of Kurdon or Gordon, thus almost establishing the identity of the modern Godi or Judi with the resting-place of the ark. With him agree most of the profane writers who have mentioned the deluge, a list of whom will be found in Bochart's *Geographia Sacra*, Cap. III. To these, I may add the modern tradition, still current among the Mohammedans and Christians of Assyria, that Jebel Judi received the survivors of the deluge. Another remarkable coincidence is the aptitude of the soil in the valleys of the Judi range for the rearing of the vine. The grape is still much cultivated among the Nestorians, and I regret to say that they frequently abuse the bounty of Providence in the same manner that Noah is recorded to have done.

Most interpreters have restricted the plain of Shinar to the

* The appellation of the mountains near Jezirah is written in Arabic جودي *Judi*. But the و *waw*, is easily substituted for the ر *re*, and thus جودي *Gurdi* or *Jurdi*, might become with little visible alteration جودي *Gudi* or *Judi*.

immediate vicinity of Babylon. Yet it seems probable that this appellation embraced the whole of the plain country, from the Judi range to the city of Baghdad, including both shores of the Tigris, bounded to the east by the mountains of Kurdistan, and to the west by the mountains of Sinjar and the confines of Arabia. Nor does the conjecture seem improbable that the name Shinar or Sinar, which, in Semetic languages, is written with an *y*, ain, should have been changed during the lapse of years into Singar or Sinjar, more especially as there are instances on record where this change has been effected.*

From Jezirah we proceeded by slow journeys to Zakko, and from thence to Mosul, where we crossed the bridge of boats, and were soon resting from our labors under the hospitable roof of Mr. Rassam, the English vice-consul, whose name and merits are so well known to the majority of travelers.

My poor friend B— still continued seriously ill, but the medical art in Mosul had fallen to a very low ebb, and the only Esculapius we could procure was the physician of the pasha, an Armenian, who had studied in Italy. His knowledge, however, was by no means equal to his good will, and B— was obliged to bring his own medical science to bear upon his own case; at length, after a hard struggle, he was pronounced convalescent, and was able to commence the duties of his mission.

The town of Mosul is situated on the western bank of the Tigris, about three hundred miles to the north of Baghdad; behind it, to the westward, extend the plains of Sinjar, in front is the river, and on the opposite side the mounds, commonly called Kuyunjik, which have hitherto been supposed to be the only remains of ancient Nineveh. A little to the south of these is a village, situated on the top of a low hill, called Nebbi Yunas, or the Prophet Jonah, from a tradition, long current in these parts, that Jonah died and was buried there.

Following the course of the road which divides Kuyunjik

* One well-known example occurs to me at the present moment of this mutation of the *y*, ain, and *j*, gimel, of the Semetic dialects. The name Gomorrah, is written in Hebrew with *y*, ain, and should be pronounced 'Amorrah, the first *a* being sounded with a slight guttural intonation. Yet the Septuagint gives it in Greek characters thus, Γομορρᾶ, Gomorrha.

from the village, the traveler arrives, after a journey of fifteen miles, at a group of rocky hills entitled *Jebel Makloub*, occupying an isolated position in the midst of a large plain, which extends from the banks of the Tigris to the Judi range.* Behind these, and on either side of them, appear the mountains of Kurdistan, the highest of which are covered with snow during six months of the year, and may be plainly seen from the terraces of Mosul.

The houses of this modern Nineveh are built of stone, and profusely ornamented with a kind of marble found in the vicinity. Externally, they present little that is pleasing or attractive. As you proceed through the streets, the eye wanders along a connected series of dead walls, which give the city an air of desolation and decay. Few of the houses are in a perfect state, and it is not uncommon to perceive a heap of ruins in the court of a spacious and handsome mansion; the interiors are arranged in the usual Oriental fashion, the apartments being built round a square or oblong court; they have rarely any connection with each other. On one side of this court is a large arched recess, called the *aiwān*, the point of which is only three or four feet below the terraced roof. Within the *aiwān* are arranged sofas, for the accommodation of visitors and of the family during the hot season, when it is considered unhealthy to remain in the rooms. Most of the houses possess a suite of subterranean apartments, called *serdāb*, where the wealthier people retire during the three hot months of the year; these lower rooms are generally handsomely decorated with marble, while, in the midst, a bubbling fountain diffuses coolness and refreshment throughout the heated and oppressive atmosphere.

The roofs of the houses are perfectly flat, with low balustrades; they prove an agreeable walk in the cool of the evening, and are peculiarly favorable to meditation. Frequently have I enjoyed a solitary promenade on my terrace, my eye fixed on the mounds of Nineveh and the snow-capped mountains of Kurdistan, and my thoughts, perhaps, far away. Thus we read in ancient days of an apostle going up to the house-top to pray; a strange circumstance in European eyes,

* The name *Jebel Judi* is only applied at present to the mountains of that range in the vicinity of *Jezirah*; but, to avoid confusion, I have bestowed it, according to the ancient usage, on the whole chain to the eastward of the plains of Nineveh and Navkoor.

but perfectly natural to an Oriental. For my own part, when I wished to be particularly solitary, I always repaired to the roof, and felt myself perfectly cut off from the world below.

The terrace is to the Eastern, in fact, what the study is to the English gentleman, a sort of sanctum into which no one intrudes without special leave. When I was in the court or the aiwān, even strangers would come in without scruple, seat themselves, and enter unreservedly into conversation; but if they were told I was above, they either went away, or desired my servant to announce them. I never remember a single instance in which any other than a very intimate friend ever mounted the stairs. On one occasion, I had a number of Nestorians residing in my house, who were remarkably fond of strolling about the terraces when I was not there, but when I made my appearance above, they always withdrew, lest they should seem to intrude upon my privacy.

For about eight months in the year the weather at Mosul is temperate, though the cold in winter, particularly towards night, is sometimes intense. On these occasions, the houses are generally warmed by wood fires where there is a chimney to the apartment, which is not always the case. In the latter instance, the fire is kindled in a small round brazen vessel, with two rings attached to the sides to facilitate its conveyance from one room to the other; the warmth thus obtained is, however, very inconsiderable. During the months of May, June, July, and August, the heat is most intense and intolerable; I could scarcely bear the thin drawers and silken shirt which formed my only clothing within doors while the hot weather lasted. It was indeed a luxury to throw off the tight pantaloons, stiff cravats, and coats of civilized Europe, and give the limbs their full freedom in the loose and flowing garments of the East; yet a strange and unaccountable prejudice seems to have induced the great majority of European residents to maintain their uncomfortable and undignified costume, and the traveler who should dare to be so singular as to prefer comfort and common sense to the scruples and whims of his countrymen would be treated with ridicule, if not with contempt. It is urged, indeed, that there is more respect paid to the Frank costume since its introduction as an official garb by the late sultan, and this, doubtless, is the reason why every man who can boast, even indirectly, of

European descent, delights to make himself as frightful and uncomfortable as possible; but, if the matter were rightly examined, it might be found that the estimation so much coveted, if it really exists, is shown to the arts and arms of Frangistan, and not to her costume.

It is most refreshing, during the burning heats of July, to walk with bare feet on the marble pavement of the room, or on the flags of the court. Even the fastidious sons and daughters of Europe agree during this period to eschew the use of stockings, and sometimes of shoes. One great drawback, however, to this pleasure is the abundance of scorpions and centipedes during the hot weather; you put your hand to the latch of your door, and a black and dangerous scorpion creeps out of the keyhole to exact vengeance for his disturbed peace and comfort. As you lie on your sofa, and stretch forth your fingers to grasp the beads, which are a constant appendage to every resident in the East, your hand falls upon a most unprepossessing-looking centipede, who has been quietly contemplating you for the last half hour.

One evening I was seated barefoot in the middle of the court, and had just called for a chibouque, regardless of a black round mass that lay near one of my feet; the servant came with the pipe in his hand, uttered an exclamation, and, hastily withdrawing his slipper, he inflicted two or three vigorous blows on the ground; astonished at the action, I looked in the direction of his attack, and beheld the crushed and battered form of a black scorpion, about five inches long. This incident made me more careful of going barefoot ever after.

After a short stay at the consulate, I hired a house in the neighborhood for nine pounds a year. It contained six rooms, a kitchen, and a court, where the sun never penetrated, even during the hottest season of the year. I also engaged a servant, a papal Chaldean by religion, who was a native of one of the neighboring villages. He spoke only Arabic, Chaldee, and Kurdish, and I trusted by his aid, and that of necessity, soon to master the former. A day or two after his engagement, Toma, for so he was called, desired my permission to spend a few days among his friends, before entering upon his new duties as my man of all work. As it was Christmas, I could not refuse him, and he took his departure. *But, being desirous* to take possession of my new quarters, I

determined not to wait for him, but to install myself in the house before his arrival. For this purpose, I demanded and obtained the key, notwithstanding the remonstrances of my Mosulian friends, who deemed the act of sleeping alone in an empty house an act of great moral courage.

The key was not one of those convenient media of obtaining an entrance which may be carried commodiously in the waistcoat pocket; it was a long bar of wood, with two projections towards the end, more than a foot in length, and well qualified not only to open a door, but to knock down any one who might attempt to enter it without permission. Armed with this implement of offence and defence, I went to and fro between my own dwelling and the consulate, generally taking my meals, and spending my evenings at the latter.

During my servantless state, I received the attentions and the services of an old Chaldean, who was considered rather a character, and who was one of the hangers on at the consulate. His figure was gaunt and bony, but attenuated and bare; his dress was of the most scanty description; and he resembled exceedingly the figure of Don Quixote, divested of his arms and warlike accoutrements. But his politeness was most exemplary, and even extra-Oriental. At almost every word, and certainly between every sentence he uttered, there occurred the constant repetition of the phrase, *Ana Gholamuk*, I am thy slave; from which circumstance, he was never called by his baptismal name, but always *Ana Gholamuk*, which appellation had become so familiar to him that I doubt whether he would have answered to any other. Poor *Ana Gholamuk*, however, did not possess a virtue void of suspicion, for, on one occasion, he was shrewdly suspected of having purloined sundry articles from my friend B—, who was more than half inclined to have him sent to prison in consequence. But as yet he was blameless, and as far as regarded me, his honesty was unimpeachable, probably, because there was nothing left in his way.

With the aid of this faithful retainer, who ever after manifested a particular affection to my kitchen, I managed to conduct my household affairs until the arrival of my servant *Toma*, who made his appearance two days behind time, with a long apology, and a present, both of which I was graciously pleased to accept. I now commenced housekeeping in the

Oriental style, and rarely found my expenses exceed sixpence per diem.

The European society at Mosul was of course limited. There were the English vice consul Mr. Rassam, his wife an English lady, and her mother, who had come to end her days so many miles away from old England. Besides these, there were the American Presbyterian missionaries, among whom was then numbered the late lamented Dr. Grant, M. Botta the French consul, whose name is well known as the discoverer of the antiquities of Khorsabad, ourselves, and an English merchant, who had spent about four years in the country and did not know a syllable of the language. I must not omit to mention the Italian Dominican Friars, who superintended the affairs of the Papal Chaldean Church; but they withheld themselves from society, and seemed studiously to avoid the "English heretics."

I began, soon after my arrival, to apply myself to the Arabic language, in which I had no sooner made some proficiency, than I determined to put my mettle to the proof, and make some excursions in the vicinity. Toma was taken into consultation, and undertook to provide the necessary articles. Post horses were hired as far as the village of Bagh Sheikha, and, as my own private wants were small, I managed to be on horseback, and crossing the bridge of boats over the Tigris, two days after my design had been formed.

Near the village of Nebbi Yunas is a well, entitled Beer-el-benat, the Well of the Girls, respecting which there seems to be no tradition, except that, in the opinion of the wise men of Mosul, it is subject to nightly visits from the Djin. Toma was riding by my side, and had commenced a narrative respecting his sickness while at Diarbekir, and recovery by means of the intercession of St. George—who, he affirmed positively, had appeared to him three times—when a man dressed in white passed by, and seemed to eye us with no friendly countenance. Toma gave his horse a kick, the creature reared, and he uttered a very common phrase, "Yinnaal ish sheitān,"* "May the devil (alluding to the horse) be cursed."

At the word "sheitān" the stranger scowled fearfully, his hand sought the hilt of his long dagger, and he overwhelmed

* The word sheitān is used in Arabic as an equivalent for a daring or mischievous person. Sometimes the application is considered complimentary, and means simply, he is a clever fellow.

Toma with a volley of abuse in a kind of mixed jargon, which I did not understand; the latter began to retaliate, but I bade him come on, and as we were riding forward I asked him the reason of the stranger's anger. He replied, "He is a dog of a Yezidee, (may his father be cursed and his grave defiled!) and he cannot bear to hear the name of Satan his master, may confusion fall upon him!"

"Are there any Yezidees in Bagh Sheikha?" I demanded.

"There are many of them," he rejoined, "and not only there, but in all the villages of the plain, even to the foot of the Kurdish mountains. Do I not know them and their doings, for am not I a son of the villages?"

"What is their belief, and when do they worship?" I inquired.

"Upon my head," was his answer, "they believe in the devil and worship him. That is known to everybody; but they have no priests, no altars, and no sacrifice. Their chief church is at Sheikh Adi, and they call those white buildings which you see yonder sacred places."

I looked in the direction indicated, and beheld a number of small cone-shaped edifices covered with white plaster, which I had at first mistaken for tombs. Each of these temples was entered by an aperture about four feet in height and wide enough to suffer one person to creep through at a time. I looked in, but perceived nothing except the bare walls. Some of these buildings might have been large enough to contain four persons at once, but scarcely more. Altogether, they seemed more adapted to serve as memorials of some person or thing than to act as places of worship.

We arrived soon after at the village of Bagh Sheikha, prettily situated at the foot of Jebel Makloub. Not far from it was a plantation of olives, which, viewed from a distance, gave it the appearance of being embosomed in trees. Our arrival excited no little commotion, and the whole of the population who were at leisure, which happened to be all the males, assembled in the market-place to stare at the strangers. The poor women were obliged to be contented with looking at us as they passed, bending under the weight of their numerous tasks. They seemed, indeed, to be the only persons in the village who had anything to do. Toma left me stationary, while he went on with my papers to the Kiahya of the place, a papal Syrian, in company with whom he speedily returned.

Toma made his appearance in a great rage : he stamped, shouted, and bestowed on the head man all the uncomplimentary epithets, and they are many, in the Arabic and Chaldaic vocabulary.

"What is the matter?" I inquired. "What has he done?"

"Aish amal! what has he done, the unclean! why, he has quartered thy Revelation on a cursed Yezidee. But thou shalt punish his insolence; for, verily, if thou writest to the pasha, he shall eat the stick exceedingly. May his father—"

But here I interposed, being somewhat weary of listening to vociferation, and of remaining like an equestrian statue in the middle of the square. I assumed a dignified air, and expressing in broken Arabic my sorrow that Christians should have so little hospitality as to refuse shelter to one of their own faith, I bade Toma lead the way to the Yezidee's house. He obeyed, reluctantly.

"It is the best house in the place," remonstrated the Kiahya, submissively, as, completely crestfallen, he followed in the rear.

"I believe it, oh Kiahya," I replied; "for, bil hock, truly, you Syrians are a poor people; you have no money nor houses."

"I did not mean that," said the Kiahya.

"You are all dogs, you villagers, and may eat dirt," growled Toma.

And with this polite speech we arrived at the door of the Yezidee.

It had a clean and neat exterior, very different from the dirty huts that surrounded it; and the air of the owner, who had stepped out to welcome us, very much prepossessed me in his favor. His look was melancholy, but not servile, and he addressed himself to the cringing Kiahya with the appearance of one who was conscious of belonging to a despised and persecuted race, yet had preserved his self-respect and independence of character unaltered by the conviction.

He looked doubtfully at me for a few minutes, and then inquired of Toma whether I was a Christian.

"Christian!" exclaimed Toma, "Christian! To be sure he is, and a better Christian than the swine of this village. For several years," continued Toma, addressing himself to the crowd of villagers who were lounging about the door, "for several years have I eaten the bread of the English, and

can testify that they are good Christians, who believe truly in our Lord the Messiah, and our Lady Mary the Virgin. What more would you require?" said Toma, looking triumphantly at the Kiahya, as, with a view to confound him still more, he drew out an Arabic translation of our Prayer Book, which I had given him, and counted up the different festivals of the Virgin and Saints, reading them aloud for the edification of the crowd. "Who shall say now," he triumphantly inquired, "that the English are not Christians?"

"Saheeh! saheeh! it is true, it is true," responded the crowd, among whom were several Mohammedans, "the English are Christians, and believe in the Saints."

The Yezidee's countenance brightened. "It is enough," he said, taking my hand and laying it upon his breast; "you are a Christian. Enter, my lord, and may peace be with you."

I followed him into a small but neat apartment, the floor of which was covered with carpets, which he kindly permitted to remain during my stay. He spoke some words in Kurdish to two women, who had followed us into the room, and they brought in my bed, spread it in one corner, and presently sent me a bowl of yavort, or sour milk, a drink much prized by the Turks. My host seated himself opposite to me, and I endeavored, with the occasional assistance of Toma, to draw him into conversation; but he either knew very little of the tenets of his sect, or was not disposed to be communicative. He told me that his people hated the Mohammedans, and loved the Christians; that, from my red cap, and other parts of my dress, he had, at first, taken me for a Moslem; but, praise be to God! I was a Christian instead. He advised me to go to the great temple of Sheikh Adi, where I should be welcome, and see many wonderful things.

Our conversation was interrupted by the arrival of a crowd of visitors, headed by the priest of the papal Syrians, a short, pompous man, with a nasal twang in his speech, and a most self-satisfied air. They seated themselves, and the conversation soon fell upon the English.

"They have no religion, wonderful to say," began one of the party.

"Yes, yes," said another; "they believe in our Lord Jesus, but not in our Father, the Pope."

"But they have no churches," remonstrated number one.

Toma here interposed. "He had seen," he said, "our service performed in a chapel at Mosul, which Kass Georgios (my friend B.) had fitted up in a style like their own, and there was consecration every Sunday, and prayers every day; and the English fasted also, for, behold, here it was written in their book."

"That may be," was the answer; "but are we fools, O man? Do we not know that they do all this to deceive us?"

Toma's choler was rising, but he was afraid of the priest, whose hand he had devoutly kissed when he entered; and merely remarked, apologetically, "Well, they are good people."

The clergyman had been puffing away in silence at the pipe, which, according to Eastern etiquette, I had handed him when he sat down; but he now deemed it derogatory to his dignity to listen any longer to observations from others on a point concerning his own profession. I could easily perceive that he was the learned man of the village; and well might he be, for he understood Arabic, Syriac, Chaldee, and Kurdish. He spoke with the air of a man who has been considering his subject carefully, and has thoroughly mastered it at last.

"The English *are* Christians, and have churches; but they only go to them once a month, and take the Lord's Supper once in twenty years. On the latter occasion, the priest stands on a high place, that he may not be torn in pieces by the crowd who rush tumultuously forward, snatch the consecrated bread out of his hands, and scramble for it. They are also allowed to marry as many wives as they please, and some of them have more than twenty. They are a poor and beggarly people, and have a heavy debt which they are unable to pay. They are obliged to borrow large sums of the King of France, who has obtained by this means a kind of dominion over them."

At the conclusion of this oration, the speaker looked at me as if he had been advancing heavy and unanswerable truths, which I might dislike, but could not controvert.

"Ma hu Saheeh, is it not true?" he asked.

"It is a great falsehood," I answered, calmly, as I took the pipe from my lips.

The assembly seemed divided, and appeared to expect that I should enter still more into the defence of my nation.

My speech, in Arabic, was feeble; but I contrived, by

help of the Prayer Book, to maintain my ground ; and, after a little, forced even the priest to confess that the English might be Christians, and they might have the sacrament oftener than once in twenty years ; but as to their poverty that was a known fact, and could not be controverted. Had they not a debt which amounted to many millions of piastres ? Of course I could not deny this : but my attempts to explain the benefit of that national blessing were utterly unavailing, and my hearers departed with the firm and invincible conviction that the English were a beggarly and bankrupt nation.

My host remained till they had all left. "That priest," he said, "is a conceited fellow. When I first came here, he tried to stir up the people against me, and I had much sorrow from him. Bey, what you have said is the truth, and the English are a good people. Are there any of our race among them in your own land ? They tell me that some of our brethren live in peace in the country of Hind, under the English Sultan."

My reply was cut short by Toma, who had been escorting the priest to the outer door, where he asked him, with great earnestness, at what hour he would say mass on the following morning. To his credit, be it said, he was a great church-goer, and had a considerable respect for the clergy. Nevertheless, he could not help saying, as he prepared the bed, "My master, that priest is a great hunzeer,* but, Inshallah, he shall be disappointed to-morrow, for he may wait long enough before I go to his service."

CHAPTER X.

Monastery of St. Matthew. Mohammedan veneration for Christian tombs. Toma's story. An alarm. The gazelle. A night view of the plain of Nineveh. Shereef Bey. Khoorsabad. A discovery.

ONE of my objects in leaving Mosul had been the accomplishment of a design, which I had lately entertained, of

* Pig.

visiting the deserted monastery of St. Matthew, distant about six miles from the village of Bagh Sheikha. As our post horses had been hired only as far as the latter place, I directed Toma to procure some mules from the village, which after some trouble he succeeded in doing. In these matters, much must depend upon the disposition and personal feeling of the Kiahya, who rules absolute over the villages. In the present instance, that magistrate was not very friendly disposed, for, being a most bigoted adherent of the Syrian Papal Church, he looked upon an Englishman as a heretic and infidel, whom it was the duty of a good Christian to harass and annoy as much as possible. The priest had shown himself, the day before, decidedly inimical, and his influence in the village was by no means inconsiderable. In the course of conversation, he had accused the English of being worse than pagans, of instigating the Nestorians at Ouromiah to break crosses, pollute their churches, and abandon the weekly celebration of the Holy Communion. He alluded to the operations of the American missionaries in that city; and I could hardly convince him that they were not Englishmen, nor even members of the English Church.

After he had seen our Liturgy, he began to waver somewhat in his former opinion; but it was quite clear that, in times past, he had pictured an Englishman as the representative of everything vicious and impious. Charity compels me to hope that these calumnies against our nation and religion have not been disseminated by the emissaries of the Roman Church to forward a political and religious end; but it is singular that they should be generally most prevalent among members of that communion, and that, when they appear elsewhere, they can almost always be traced to a similar source.

Our road to the monastery lay at the foot of the range called Jebel Makloub, which rises in the midst of the great plain extending from the Kurdish mountains to the Tigris. We were accompanied by two villagers, at the earnest request of Toma, who feared alike the Kurds and the goblins, that were said to play strange nocturnal pranks in the ruined and deserted monastery. Our escort had girded on two rusty swords, which act appeared to afford them much satisfaction and courage, as though the possession of arms had been sufficient of itself to deter all assailants from attacking us.

After a ride of two hours over stones and large fragments of rock, which threatened at each moment to impede our further progress, we arrived at the mouth of a narrow gorge which separates the mountain of St. Matthew from Jebel Makloub. At the foot of the former, was a small Kurdish village inhabited by Mohammedans, who cast no very friendly looks at us as we rode by. The ascent of the mountain was by a winding path, rendered difficult and dangerous by the fragments of rock which blocked it up, and, in some places, obliged us to dismount and climb over them the best way we could.

From the ledge on which the monastery was situated a gentle slope, covered with green grass, descended about one-fourth of the elevation of the former, and was bounded by a low wall, as it were, of rocky fragments, which might have been the result of manual labor. Skirting this slope to the left, we soon arrived in front of the grand entrance, over which are the apartments formerly occupied by the Syrian Jacobite Bishop of Mosul, who, during the prevalence of the hot season in the town, generally made this place his summer residence. When Mr. Rich visited the monastery (in 1820) he found it tenanted by the monks and their episcopal superior, under whom the establishment was then flourishing in full vigor. Since then, however, it has undergone a total change, and has been entirely abandoned by its inmates.

Not many years ago, as the monks were celebrating the midnight service of their church, a band of Kurds crossed the summit of the mountain, burst into the monastery, broke open the church doors, and defiled the sanctuary with the blood of the worshipers. Ever since that fatal night, the building has been deserted, and the superstitious peasant tells of lights seen dancing amid the ruins, of fearful and spectral forms gliding along the rocky terraces, of wails and moanings, and strange and supernatural sounds that have broken the stillness of the midnight hour.

The monastery consists of four courts, now covered with grass, and surrounded by the ruins of the cells which formed originally the dwellings of the monks. The stone bench of the kitchen was still black from the fires that had been kindled upon it, and the refectory was in a tolerable state of preservation. But the part most perfect and uninjured was the

church of the monastery, a fine building with a porch before the entrance. The interior consisted of two aisles, divided from each other by a row of stout pillars supporting saracenic arches, which were terminated by a wall passing along the right side of the choir, and dividing the sanctuary from the small chapel on the south side, formerly used as a baptistery.

A low balustrade of stone work divided the choir from the nave, the former of which contained two octangular desks of marble, from which the lessons were wont to be read. At the east end of the choir, a stone wall, with three arched entrances, supplied the place of a screen, and separated the choir from the sanctuary. Within this wall was the great altar, a square block of stone, raised on three steps, behind which appeared a semicircular recess. Within the recess was a bench of similar form, in the centre of which was an elevated seat or throne, surmounted by a stone canopy. Here was the place of the bishop and his clergy, at the celebration of the Liturgy. During the other offices, they stood in the second division of the church, which I have entitled the choir.

On the north side of the great altar, which occupied a central and detached position in the middle of the sanctuary, was a small chapel, containing a stone table attached to the wall. This table is termed the prothesis, and upon it the elements are placed before they are carried to the great altar. The corresponding chapel to the south of the latter contained the font, a large vessel of stone, well adapted for the purposes of immersion, which the Eastern churches practice in lieu of sprinkling. To the north of the choir was an entrance leading to a small chamber, which contained the monuments of several Syrian Jacobite bishops, among others of the celebrated Oriental historian and divine, Gregorius Bar Hebræus, called also Aboulfarage.

One of the men who had accompanied us from Bagh Sheikha was a Mohammedan, and, to my great surprise, he knelt respectfully before each of the tombs, and kissed them repeatedly and with great veneration. On asking him the reason why he thus revered the memory of Christians, he replied, that they were good men, and professors of Islam. This term in fact includes not only Mohammedans, but all Jews until the time of our Saviour, and all Christians from that period till the appearance of the false prophet.

As we moved about the different parts of the church, we disturbed large assemblages of bats and owls, the flapping of whose wings dislodged portions of the plaster from the roof and covered us with dust. After having satisfied my curiosity, I returned to the porch. Between it and the church was a narrow staircase leading to a small room, one window of which looked into the sacred building, and the other into a small chapel dedicated to the Virgin. It had served as a kind of vestry in former times, and was used by visitors to the monastery as a sleeping apartment.

My dinner or supper having been cooked below, I ate and drank, and was about to prepare myself for repose. But, hardly had I finished my meal when a violent storm came on, the wind howled dismally through the old arches and ruined cells, the rain began to pour down in torrents, and imagination might almost trace, in the mournful echo of the blasts, the origin of those moans and lamentations which had so often been heard below. Toma and his companions had originally taken up their station in a room underneath; but, when the storm began, they appeared with rueful faces, and requested permission to keep me company, for Toma remarked, that his solicitude for my safety could not allow him to remain at a distance from me. The others complained that the rain had invaded their apartment, and, therefore, they hoped that they might be allowed to share mine.

Although I felt that their society would be little protection in case of a visitation from either Kurds or genii, I could not refuse to have pity on their terrors, and consented to grant their request. The villagers from Bagh Sheikha had brought a good supply of wood, from which they supplied the materials for a cheerful fire. The wind and rain without had not abated in violence, and feeling indisposed for sleep, I requested Toma to continue the story of his illness at Diarbekir, which had been interrupted on a previous occasion by the appearance of the Yezidee. My worthy Chaldean adherent loved nothing better than to hear himself talk; and having, by my directions, taken his seat cross-legged on the floor, he began his tale:—

“I have informed you already, oh, my master, that I was the servant of an Englishman, who, like yourself, was a traveler in this country. He was a good man, but rather hasty and impatient, as, with your leave, most Englishmen are.

Instead of journeying, as we do, for about an hour, and then alighting to smoke a pipe and to drink coffee, it was nothing but 'Yallah, yallah'* from the beginning of the day's march to the end. When we arrived at a station, only a few hours' rest was allotted to us, and away went my master again as if some evil demon was in pursuit of him. Well, I could not endure all this haste, for my motto, and that of every Eastern man, is, as you doubtless know, 'Yawash, yawash.'† So, when we reached Diarbekir, I fell sick, and was unable to proceed any further.

"My master was very sorry, for, as I told you, he was a good man, but, had I been his brother, he would not have waited for me. So he said, 'Toma, Inshallah, I depart from Diarbekir at two o'clock to-morrow morning, but I shall leave you here, pay you the whole of your wages and give you a present besides, so that, when you are well, you may return in peace to your village.' Before I could thank him he was gone to make arrangements for me, and ere I had recovered from my surprise I was comfortably settled in the house of one of our priests, whom my master begged to take care of me, leaving him money for necessary expenses, and he also gave me money, saying, 'Addio, Toma, may God restore you!'

"So I kissed his hand, and lo! he was gone, and I heard the trampling of his horse's feet as I was counting the sum he had left me. I need not tell you that it was more than my due, for the English, although hasty, are a generous people; may God preserve them!

"My illness increased, and though the good priest, my host, who understood medicine much better, as he said, than any Frank doctor, did his best for me, I grew worse and worse. My mind began to wander, and often I seemed to be in my own village again, with my old friends and neighbors around me, far from Diarbekir and its black walls. Once I thought that I went into our village church and prayed before the picture of St. George, that Father Antoun, may God have mercy upon him, brought from Rome. And when I awoke, I reasoned with myself thus: 'Why should I not ask the good St. George to help me? for it seems that man can do nothing for me.' So I prayed to the good saint for his in-

* An exclamation used to express haste, and to hurry on the Tatar or Sur-rudgee, who accompanies travelers.

† Gently, gently.

tercession and aid before I slept, and in the night he stood before me, dressed like the picture in the church, except that he seemed to be on foot. His countenance looked pleasant and smiling, so that I took courage and said, 'O Mar Georgios, pity me.' Then he smiled graciously on me, and seemed to touch me with his spear, after which he disappeared, and I awoke. Then sending for Kas* Stephan, I related to him my dream.

"But Kas Stephan said, 'Isbar, have patience my son, for it may be that the holy George will again appear to thee.' And behold, on that night, and on the next also, he came as before, and I began to recover, and soon after was completely restored, whereupon I returned with joy, and made an offering to St. George in my own village church, telling my story to all the villagers, who wondered thereat exceedingly."

"Toma," I said, when he had concluded, "there is but one Mediator between God and man, even our Lord Yesua. St. George we know little of; but I hope and believe that he was a holy man who would have counseled you, if you could have asked his advice, to pray directly to God himself. Perhaps, however, it may have pleased Allah to forgive you for what you did in ignorance, and with a good intention, and to look rather on your faith, and earnest desire to obtain a supernatural blessing through the medium of His servant."

I might have gone on farther in my admonition, but when I had proceeded thus far, Toma laid his hand on my arm, and entreated me to be silent, as he heard, he said, the sound of footsteps. I listened, and could clearly distinguish the falling of rubbish, and other noises, which seemed to indicate the approach of intruders. Snatching up my gun, I sallied forth in spite of Toma's entreaties, and followed the sounds, which appeared to be receding, into the court below. Another fall of rubbish directed my attention to the ramparts of the monastery, where, in full relief against the sky, I beheld the figure of a large gazelle, its wild watchful eyes directed towards the porch.

The storm was passing over, and the moon was shining in her full brightness, with that clear brilliancy which is witnessed only in Eastern skies. Sheltered by a pillar, I watched

* Kas for Kasees means literally presbyter, and is always prefixed to the names of priests by the Chaldean and Syrian Christians.

the movements of the gazelle. It stood for some minutes as if irresolute, and then leaped over the rampart: I rushed forward, and clambering over some rubbish, reached the place where I first saw it. Looking down, I beheld the beautiful creature bounding from ledge to ledge along the side of the mountain, as if exulting in its wild freedom, and defying the swiftest efforts of pursuers. I was enjoying the sight when Toma and his companions joined me. Feeling in no mood for their society, I dismissed them to their repose, and continued to gaze with much interest on the scene before me.

At the foot of the mountain lay the plains of Athur, once the site of that great and mighty Nineveh, where reigned the first conquerors whom the earth ever knew. Happy might it have been for her children, had the era of conquest, spoliation, and violence terminated with the downfall and ruin of that haughty city, which first taught the lessons of ambition and crime to those who too eagerly received and carried them into action. Yet what a moral might be derived from the present condition of the capital of Assur. In lieu of lofty palaces and gorgeous temples, the eye surveys only the mounds composed of their dust, or the miserable collections of huts which have arisen on their site. The gardens where Sardanapalus reveled are wasted and desolate; the sounds of soft and luxurious music that once floated on the soft Assyrian breezes, have yielded to the silence of devastation or decay. Nothing could be more striking, indeed, than the stillness which prevailed. Not a sound interrupted the profound repose of nature and of man. Even the cry of the wild animals which disturbs the solitude of ancient Babylon, was not heard here. It was the calmness, the dignified decay of ruined majesty, not the blighting operation of a curse which the crimes and the sins of past days had called forth. The relics of Babylon impressed me with awe, almost with terror; those of Nineveh inspired more a feeling of sympathy and mournful regret.

As I pace that lonely rampart in my midnight walk, visions of the past seem to rise from yonder deserted plains, and to present themselves before me. Lofty palaces uprear their towering pinnacles in every direction. Terraced gardens, where art has done its utmost to rival, and, perhaps, to out-vie nature, appear filled with choicest fruits, and garnished *with flowers* of the most varied and brilliant hues. Artificial

streams pursue their winding course amid these luxuriant plantations, and temper with refreshing coolness the heats of a summer sun. On their banks a thousand curiously wrought bowers receive the gay troupes of revelers, who, crowned with garlands, spend their hours as if life were designed to be one long and uninterrupted revel. From his marble tower, the Chaldean sage tracks the silent course of the heavenly watchers, as they gleam with redoubled brilliancy from the blue and cloudless expanse above. Glittering bands of warriors pass to and fro, exhibiting to the gaze of the curious, the spoils of distant India and Media, mingled with the trophies torn from the cities of the sacred land. Suddenly in the midst of that careless and rejoicing city, a worn and travel-stained form pronounces in a loud and unearthly voice —“ Yet, forty days, and Nineveh shall be destroyed.” The monarch quits his throne, the people change their habits of festivity for sackcloth, and all prostrate themselves before the God of the stranger. The supplication is heard, and, for a time at least, the doom of Nineveh is averted.

The vision changes, and in lieu of the gay and joyous scenes which first attracted the eye, or the mournful and penitential groups that succeeded to them, the imagination pictures the public places of the mighty city filled with anxious and apprehensive crowds who recall with trembling earnestness the fearful predictions of a Hebrew Seer. From the neighboring regions of Alkosh have gone forth the accents of doom. The bloody city, the city of robbery and lies, must perish. Hosts of barbarians rush from the neighboring hills, overpower the effeminate and feeble inhabitants; and Nineveh falls, even as a gallant ship that founders in the midst of the solitary and trackless ocean, leaving no trace of her existence, no floating memorial of her fate.*

Returning to my room, I slept undisturbed till the next morning, when we prepared to return to Bagh Sheikha. While Toma and his companions were getting things in readiness, I set out to examine the locality of the monastery, having arranged to meet the mules at the bottom of the

* The greatest obscurity seems to envelop the final fate of Nineveh. After a brief, but extensive dominion over Western Asia, its name disappears altogether from the pages of history. Diodorus informs us that it was destroyed by Arbaces the Mede, and Belasis, a Babylonian, supposed to be the same with Nabopolassar.

mountain of St. Matthew. Above us, rose the summit of the eminence to a considerable height, the rocky side having been hollowed in many places, to form retreats for those who considered life in the monastery as not sufficiently solitary for their tastes. The paths leading to these caves were steep, narrow, and dangerous, but custom had doubtless rendered them less difficult to the devotees, who were accustomed to attend even the midnight services in the church below.

Descending the mountain, I came to a hollow cavern, containing a dropping well, near which was a kind of reservoir or tank, excavated by the hand of nature or art in the recesses of the rock. It was full of water, supplied from an internal spring, and communicated with a well which we had observed above in one of the apartments of the bishop's house.

On arriving at Bagh Sheikha, I resumed my old quarters in the house of the Yezidee, who daily treated us with increasing kindness and hospitality. My opponents, the priest and the Kiahya, were busily engaged in collecting the salian. The season of application for taxes is a period of no small tribulation to the inhabitants of an Eastern village. No inconsiderable amount of cunning and chicanery is called into action to oppose the violence of government agents, who generally apply the bastinado as the last resort. Nature, however, has endowed the Oriental peasant with the faculty of endurance to an extraordinary degree. Men have frequently allowed their feet to be beaten almost to a jelly before they would yield up their secreted earnings.

Soon after my return, I was honored with a visit from Sheeruf Bey, the proprietor of the village, and the adjoining lands. He viewed some maps, which I showed him, with the curiosity of a child. Though well versed in Arabic literature, he seemed astonished and even scandalized, when I informed him that the world was round. He told me that Arabic was a low vulgar dialect, and advised me to study Turkish. The interview terminated with a request for medicine, but I had unfortunately none to bestow. On inquiry, I found that the bey was the physician of the whole village, and had considerable practice, as it was his custom to give both medicine and advice gratis. He required the Frank drugs for his own use, having probably little faith in the nostrums of the country.

In the afternoon, I returned the visit, and found the bey's mansion a large, irregularly built edifice, the court of which

was, as usual, crowded with dependents. The sitting-room was a long apartment, furnished with diwan mattresses, extended on the ground, and not raised upon frames as at Mosul. A large number of the head men of the neighboring villages sat cross-legged on these, leaning against the wall, and smoking their long pipes. At the end of the room, two diwans slightly raised from the ground, were appropriated to the bey and his visitor. He rose to receive me, and, after the usual salutations, requested me to be seated.

While pipes and coffee were being served, my host began to question me about Europe. He asked whether England was larger than Russia, and if it was true that every Englishman had twenty wives; whether France were not an island, and Germany subject to the Pope of Rome. "He had heard," he continued, "that the English had a kind of machine, which traversed immeasurable distances, in a short period of time, through the air."

"Ajaib, ajaib, wonderful! wonderful!" ejaculated the whole room.

"You must know," said the bey, condescendingly, "that, when the English want to take a city, they cause this machine to hover over it, and then they begin with cannons and bombshells to demolish the houses! Verily the English are a wonderful people!"

After this, my explanation of the nature and use of balloons was thought tame and flat, and was interrupted by the bey, who inquired, "whether the English had any religion, and whether they fasted?"

"They have fast days appointed," said the priest, "in their Book of Prayers, but they do not abstain from eating on those occasions; they only substitute fish for meat."

"The wiser men, they," rejoined the bey, who probably spoke feelingly, as it was Ramadan.

When I had finished my pipe, I rose to take my leave, having impressed the bey with a more favorable opinion than he had hitherto entertained of the English. I am afraid, however, that he retained respecting us much the same sentiments that we should hold concerning the Chinese or Japanese, and considered us a race of civilized barbarians.

On my return to the house of the Yezidee, I distributed several small Arabic translations of the Elements of Geography among the villagers, and bade Toma hire some horses

for our journey. While he was gone, a Mohammedan entered, followed by several of the villagers, and, addressing himself to me, said:—

“O bey, why are you lingering here, when wonderful things are doing at Khoorsabad? Upon my head, the workmen of the French Balios* have discovered the treasure halls of Nineveh, and the idols which those Kafirs (may the curse of Allah light upon their graves!) used to worship.”

“Surely, you jest, O man!” I replied; “you mean they have found some bricks with writing upon them.”

“No, on my eye,” he answered, “they are idols and nothing else. Did I not see them as I passed through?”

This intelligence, which I received with no small degree of incredulity, determined me to change my route, and go first to Khoorsabad. The Mohammedan remained till Toma's arrival with the horses, and, finding he still persisted in his story, I took the road leading to the place where the discovery had been made. My host, the Yezidee, refused all compensation; so, taking a kind leave of him, I left the village tolerably satisfied, upon the whole, with my sojourn there.

For some days previous to my departure from Mosul, M. Botta, the amiable and intelligent Consul of France at that place, had been making excavations on the largest of the Nineveh mounds, called Kuyunjik by the Turks, but had found nothing but bricks with arrow-headed inscriptions. It would have seemed then to me and others at Mosul, the height of improbability to anticipate that any more substantial relics of ancient Assyria might be brought to light, or to imagine that, within a few feet of the green turf, which our horses' feet had so often trodden, there lay buried some of the most singular and interesting memorials of a nation's greatness, that ever survived the wreck of time.

My disbelief and unwillingness to credit the relation of the Mohammedan villager were succeeded by emotions of almost stupefying surprise, when, after hastening through the village of Khoorsabad, I dismounted near the excavations, and cast a wondering glance at the scene which there presented itself. Slowly emerging from the excavated soil, was the upper part of a stone slab, containing, in bas-relief, the

* Consul.

representation of a siege, as I learned afterwards, when the workmen, stimulated by my presence, had cleared away the earth from the lower extremity. It is impossible for me to say, whether astonishment or gratification predominated, as I gazed on these remains of a mighty empire. Nineveh had latterly occupied my thoughts very much, but I should almost as soon have expected to encounter the figure of Ninus himself as to witness the discovery of these relics of his far-famed city. Yet, even while I hailed this first fruits of Assyrian researches, I doubted whether the slabs would bear transmission to Europe. Those tablets seemed too fragile to endure the rude mode of conveyance which must be adopted in a country so little famed for progress in the mechanical arts. They will be broken before they reach Mosul, I murmured to myself, as I stood wrapt in contemplation at the edge of the excavation. I am happy in being able to add that this prophecy has been falsified, and that my old acquaintances of Khoorsabad, with many others, have been conveyed in safety to Paris, and lodged securely within the Bibliothèque du Roi.

As M. Botta was expected to arrive the next evening at the village, I determined to await his coming, even at the personal sacrifice of passing a night in one of the wretched mud cabins in the vicinity of the excavations. Having nothing to occupy my attention, I walked into the neighboring plain, which was only partially cultivated. As I strolled along, I perceived, at the distance of about a mile from the village, what I at first supposed to be a column of stone. On approaching nearer, however, I found it was an altar or table of triangular form, supporting a round top or platform, of about two inches in thickness, bearing an inscription in cuneiform characters.

When M. Botta arrived, I made over to him my discovery, upon which he informed me that his workmen had found a similar one in another part of the plain. It is wonderful to reflect on, and almost impossible to realize, the fact that this altar must have remained in the place where I found it, for nearly two thousand years, and perhaps for a longer period: exposed to the weather, to the injuries of time, and to the misuses to which the ignorant villagers might have subjected it, still retaining its form and appearance unimpaired. The men who had offered sacrifice upon it, the haughty monarchs,

the proud priests, had long since become dust, and their very names had been forgotten; while the mute and inanimate stone alone remained to recall the existence of an empire. A humiliating reflection for the vanity of man!

The village of Khoorsabad is distant about fifteen miles to the north-east of Mosul; and is built on an artificial mound, rising about ninety feet from the plain. Its present name is supposed to be an abbreviation of the word Khosroobad, the city of Khosroo or Cyrus. If this be true, these remains may have been the work of the same people who executed the sculptures and inscriptions at Persepolis, described by Sir R. K. Porter. The arrow-headed characters seem to have been common to the three nations of Persia, Chaldea, and Assyria; and perhaps formed the vehicle for the communication, or perhaps rather concealment, of religious mysteries and astronomical observations.*

It is possible that the mound on which the village is situated would, if carefully examined, fully repay the trouble of excavating. For a small sum, the villagers would willingly quit their mud dwellings, and establish themselves elsewhere. Constant trouble and interruptions, however, must be anticipated from the Pasha of Mosul, should such a step be attempted. Ignorant themselves, and brutally indifferent to the remains of antiquity, the Turks can never be persuaded that old sculptures and inscriptions are the objects searched for by the enterprising Frank. They think that he is looking for buried treasures, or some long hidden parchments or documents, concealed by the former owners of the country; the possession of which would cause it to revert to the fortunate discoverer. Among the better classes, jealousy and prejudice, as well as the hatred and contempt for Christians, so inherent in every Mussulman breast, supply the same opposition offered by the superstition of the vulgar.

* Pliny speaks of "DCCXX annorum observationes siderum coctilibus laterculis inscriptæ." Nat. Hist. i. vii. e.

CHAPTER XI.

The plain. Sheikh Adi. The Yezidees.

AFTER spending an agreeable evening with M. Botta, under the hospitable shade of the tent which he had brought with him from Mosul, I began to think of pursuing my journey to Sheikh Adi. My preparations were made after my return to the hut where I had taken up my abode, and before daylight I was on horseback, being anxious to avoid, as much as possible, the rays of the mid-day sun. My road lay across the undulating plain which extends from the foot of the Gordyæan Mountains to the banks of the Tigris. During our ride, we encountered, perpetually, mounds of the same shape and size as that on which Khoorsabad is situated. As we drew nearer the mountains, we passed several Yezidee villages, in the vicinity of which might be observed the small cone-shaped monuments which had already attracted my attention.

At length we reached the entrance of the pass leading to Sheikh Adi, and experienced the most grateful sensations from the change which had taken place in the temperature. Instead of the heat of the plain—a heat which had of late been rendered more intolerable by the glare reflected from the low stony hills over which we had passed, the cool breezes from the mountains played around us, while the high ranges on each side of the pathway enabled us to bid defiance to the sun. In the centre of the pass, a stream, almost choked with stunted willows, crept lazily along, forming a not unpleasant contrast with the cascades, which might be discerned at the end of the numerous ravines that ever and anon opened at our side. The mountains were covered with green, and the lofty oaks, mingling their verdant foliage with each other, presented an agreeable spectacle to one who had scarcely seen a tree since his departure from Mosul.

After a ride of an hour, we reached the entrance of the

valley, at the termination of which, arising from a thick mass of foliage, might be discerned the spires and dome of Sheikh Adi. I dispatched Toma on in front to prepare the guardians of the tomb for my visit. Tired as I was, the scene was so enchanting, that I could hardly help checking the speed of my horse, and proceeding more leisurely than I might enjoy it. A quiet rivulet flowed through the midst of the valley, and supplied the inmates of the temple with the means of ablution and purification.

After I had passed the outer gate, my attention was directed to numerous tanks or cisterns, containing the purest and clearest water I have ever seen or tasted.

At the inner entrance, the subordinate ministers of the shrine met me, with expressions of kindly welcome. They were clad in garments of black, which gave a sombre air to their appearance. I dismounted, and passed through an outer court, at the side of which were several cells or recesses, which they told me were for the accommodation of the pilgrims at the great annual festival. This outer court was separated by a wall from the inner inclosure, which surrounds the edifice containing the tomb. To the right hand was a dwelling for the ministers and guardians, on the second floor of which I took up my abode. Several Nestorians from the mountains shared the hospitality of our hosts. They spoke in high terms to Toma of the kindness which they had always experienced from the Yezidees.

After my dinner, I received a visit from two of the servants of the tomb, accompanied by a middle-aged woman, who was treated with great respect, and who proved to be the mother of one of my visitors. They knew but little of Arabic, so that my conversation with them was carried on through the medium of Toma, who spoke Kurdish fluently. The old lady received with great pleasure the pipe which one of the men handed her, and showed no want of acquaintance with the art of smoking. I endeavored, but with small success, to gain from my hosts some information as to their tenets and peculiar habits. They seemed to know little, or to be unwilling to reveal what they knew. I was enabled afterwards to collect more intelligence respecting them, which will be communicated in another paragraph.

In the morning, I expressed my wish to view the interior of the temple. It forms one side of the inner court, and the

outward wall is covered with emblems, which may or may not bear a mystical character. One of the most conspicuous of these was the figure of a serpent, which might convey an allusion to the Evil Principle. On entering, I found the interior resembled very much that of a church with two aisles, divided by a range of arches. On the right of the door appeared a large tank filled with water, which my guides informed me was used for baptism. To the left were several sepulchral cells, before which lamps were burning. Curtains of printed calico suspended before the entrance of each concealed from view the sarcophagus within. The last of these cells contains the tomb of Sheikh Adi himself, and bears on it an inscription taken from the Koran.

I shall now take this opportunity of furnishing the reader with all the information which I have been able to collect respecting the Yezidees, and will then offer a few remarks on the probable origin of this singular sect.

As far as I have been able to ascertain, Hyde, in his "*Religio Veterum Persarum*," is the first European writer who mentions the Yezidees. His account, though full of prejudicial statements derived from the writings of their enemies, contains some curious particulars, a few of which I shall now insert.

"The Yezidees of Kurdistan greatly esteem black dogs, and everything else black, on account of the color of the devil, whom they venerate and call ustad, or master. The priest of the Yezidees also, who, like a fit minister of such a master, goes clad in a sombre garb, is styled by them the Yezidee disciple; but all men of this kind are called by the Mohammedans and Christians Sheitani, that is, belonging to Satan, because they acknowledge Satan to be their peer, sheikh, or guide, after that saying of the Orientals, 'Who-soever has no guide, the devil will guide him.' These deny the resurrection, and hold a middle opinion between the Mohammedans and pagans. They believe in the existence of God, but they do not worship Him."*

He goes on to accuse them of committing certain crimes and impurities at their great annual festival. The report of this writer may be taken as fairly representing the view entertained of the Yezidees by the Mohammedans and Christ-

* Hyde, "*Historia Religionis Veterum Persarum*." Appendix.

ians of Mosul and the vicinity. Yet the candid inquirer into their tenets must remember that similar calumnies existed in early times with regard to the primitive believers. The love of exaggeration and of the marvelous, which is the ruling passion of the Oriental, may well account for the propagation and reception of these monstrous charges.

The sect commonly called Yezidees refuse that appellation, as a mark of reproach. They prefer the title of *Daseni*, which is supposed to be derived from the name of an ancient province of Assyria. In contradiction to the assertion of Hyde, that they prefer black as a favorite color, I must oppose the fact, that not any of them wear it, except the guardians, or servants, of the tomb of Sheikh Adi. Their priesthood, if I may give it this title, possesses, like that of the Christians, three grades, answering to the orders of bishop, priest, and deacon.* They pay a great veneration to fire, and to the rising sun. They practice circumcision, and a rite similar in administration to baptism. A writer, quoted by Hyde, represents them as holding wine in great esteem, and of giving to it the appellation of the blood of Christ.

Much mystery seems to exist as to the object of their worship. Persons of tried veracity have assured me that, at the village of Baadri, is preserved, with great care, the figure of a peacock, made of tin, and termed *Malek Taoos*, or *King Peacock*. The Yezidees at Sheikh Adi admitted their belief in *Malek Taoos*. When questioned as to his whereabouts, they inquired where is Jesus? The answer was, everywhere. Upon which they rejoined, so is *Malek Taoos*. They profess generally great love to Christians, and to Christianity, and I have even heard the opinion expressed, that they would willingly embrace our religion, were it not that they fear the rapacity of the government might make this change of faith a pretence for extortion and violence.

The respect with which the Yezidees regard the Evil Principle renders them angry and annoyed when his name is mentioned in conversation. Yet I have never been able to discover that any act of direct adoration is paid to him. The most peculiar feature in the creed of the Yezidees is the

* It is doubtful whether those termed by the Yezidees *peers* are to be considered a separate grade. I have heard of their existence, but I never encountered any person belonging to this order. Their name, and that of the lowest grade, the *Fakeers*, is Persian.

total absence of any ritual or prescribed mode of worship. Although I have remained among them for several days, I have never been able to detect anything like veneration for a superior power; except that, at Sheikh Adi, I have remarked that they paid a kind of adoration to the rising sun.

They speak with the utmost veneration of Christ, and seem even to expect His re-appearance upon earth. They also expressed great veneration for the Gospel, a copy of which I showed them at Sheikh Adi. Respecting the latter person, I could learn nothing very satisfactory, although I was profuse in my inquiries. They did not seem to know how long the Temple had been in the possession of their sect; and, when it was asserted, in their presence, that the building had formerly been a Christian monastery, they merely remarked that it might have been so. On my asking more particularly respecting the origin of their creed, they seemed, as far as I could understand, to indicate the East as the direction from which it had formerly been introduced.

Such appear to be the principal characteristics of this interesting, and much calumniated sect, characteristics which seem to point clearly to the source from whence their doctrines originally sprang. Let us now endeavor to ascertain whether we can establish the connection, which appears at first sight so strikingly evident, between their tenets and those of Manes.

CHAPTER XII.

Early spread of Christianity in Assyria and Persia. The Magians. Manes and his institutions. Manicheism of the Yezidees. Rabban Hormuzd.

THE attention of the apostles had been, at an early period, directed to the land of Naharaim and the parts adjacent. Among the converts at the day of Pentecost, we read of the dwellers in Mesopotamia, of Parthians, Medes, and Elamites; many of whom probably carried back with them the seeds of truth, and labored in scattering them among their idolatrous countrymen. The strong similarity which existed between the manners, customs, and language of the Eastern and Western Syrians probably tended to facilitate the extension

of the Gospel, so that it is not surprising, if, before the middle of the second century, we find the Christian religion pervading the regions of ancient Assyria, and possessing a considerable number of adherents even in Persia itself.

Three hundred years after the birth of Our Lord, his divine religion had effected great conquests, and the metropolitan of Seleucia, the modern Babylon, might almost with justice lay claim to the lofty title of Patriarch of the East. But Christianity had to struggle in Persia with an antagonist more subtle and more dangerous than the effete and worn-out systems of idolatry which, in the West, yielded to it almost without a struggle. The legends of the Greek mythology required and obtained the assistance of the civil power to sustain their influence, and the rapidity with which the whole fabric of superstition crumbled and fell, after that assistance had been withdrawn, proved at once its inherent weakness, and incapability of maintaining its ground alone. But the theology of the Magi was of a widely different character. Free from much of the puerility and open folly of the Grecian system, it gave less offence to the reasoning and philosophical mind by its ceremonial observances, while an attentive regard for the duties of morality, and a freedom from the licentious practices enjoined by the rituals of other superstitions, tended to secure to its priesthood a large amount of authority and popular veneration.

Nor must we forget that the Magian system professed to solve a problem which had long been the subject of anxious and earnest speculation. The mind that attempts, without the aid of Revelation, to understand the constitution and course of mortal affairs, will find itself unable to account for the existence of evil in a world where all things seem to bear the impress of goodness. The earth that nourishes, the beauties of nature that delight their beholders, form a strong and marked contrast to the sickness that wastes and destroys the human frame, and the storms which scatter ruin and devastation in their course. The evils brought upon mankind by poverty, rapine, and warfare seem to indicate the active operation of an evil principle, endeavoring to disturb the placid serenity produced by plenty, quiet, and peace. The question, therefore, will necessarily arise, whence and of what nature is this influence, which seems to mar and disturb the happiness of creation? How is it possible that a

beneficent Being like the Creator of the universe can be at once the author of evil, and the producer of good ; the parent of two principles which must be ever in active antagonism, and mutually counteract, and therefore nullify each other?

The Magian philosophy attempted to answer and to satisfy these queries, by referring the different effects of good and evil to the operation of two principles, equal in power and authority, and continually in conflict ; nor can it be doubted that a theory could not be wanting in subtlety and apparent truth, which, under the name of Manicheism, prevailed so extensively in Western Asia and in Europe, and possessed sufficient attractions for the clear and logical mind of St. Augustine.

Such was the opinion which, in the third century, contested with Christianity the empire of the extreme East ; attracting reverence from its antiquity, and attention from the speciousness of its doctrines. The Magi found themselves, however, losing their hold on the minds of their votaries ; the doctrine of the two principles, with its hopeless fatalism, yielded before the bright vision of good, triumphing finally over evil, and of man, reconciled to God by the sufferings of incarnate Deity. Despite the persecution with which the Magi assailed the new opinions, their adherents increased ; and in Persia, as elsewhere, the blood of martyrs proved, eventually, the seed of the church.

While matters were in this state, a young Magian, named Manes, conceived the idea of reconciling, and uniting in one, the teaching of the Magi and the doctrines of Christ. Nor did the attempt seem altogether hopeless ; the Jehovah of the Gospel might be easily made to represent the Yezd, the Good Principle of the Persian mythology ; while the Satan of the Christian system became identical with the Ahriman, or Evil Principle. A substitute for the Redeemer was found in the Persian Mithras, who was supposed to represent to mankind the brightness of eternal light.

In order to recommend himself more strongly to the Christians, whose system he appears to have carefully studied, the audacious impostor had the effrontery to represent himself as the Paraclete promised by Christ to his disciples, who should lead them into all truth. This expression was perverted, by Manes, to signify that the Christian system was not yet perfect, but was to expect its completion and final

settlement at the coming of a Divine messenger, commissioned by God to explain more fully the way of life. The same pretensions were afterwards advanced by Mohammed, and admitted by his disciples as an authority for his mission.

As he proceeded in his attempt to reconcile the two systems, the Persian impostor found himself reduced to the necessity of casting discredit on nearly all the books of the Old and New Testaments, and of substituting in their place a fabrication of his own. He also affirmed that the Evil Principle was the God of the Jews, and had stirred up the chief priests to put Christ to death. He denied, however, that he really suffered crucifixion; a phantom was substituted in his place, and the Redeemer returned to his throne in the sun, having previously commissioned twelve apostles to propagate his doctrine; announcing, at the same time, that they were to expect a fuller and more perfect revelation at the appearance of a mysterious messenger termed the Paraclete.

The tenets of this new revelation seem to have been as follows. The empire of the universe is divided between two potentates, the Rulers of Light and Darkness; the Ruler of Light is in himself supremely happy and benevolent, while the Prince of Darkness is unhappy, evil, and malignant. Both these have given existence, at various times, to numberless beings, resembling themselves in character and in disposition. The Prince of Darkness, becoming aware of the existence of light in the universe, resolved to do his utmost to suppress it; to counteract his malicious designs, the Ruler of Light opposed an army, commanded by the first man, which was partially unsuccessful, for the Prince of Darkness was enabled to seize on a considerable portion of the Divine light, and to mingle it with the mass of corrupt matter; he, however, suffered afterwards a signal defeat from the armies of light, but they failed in recovering any portion of the element that had been captured.

The Prince of Darkness afterwards created the parents of the human race from this mingled mass, forming the bodies from corrupt matter, and the souls from those particles of Divine light which he had captured. The beneficence of the Good Principle then formed the earth as an habitation for the newly-created beings, that, while dwelling upon it, the captive particles of light might be delivered from their corporeal prisons, and be restored to their former condition.

In order to aid them in their struggles with corrupt and malignant matter, the Ruler of Light produced, from his own essence, two beings, entitled Christ and the Holy Ghost, the former of whom he dispatched on a mission to mankind, clothed with the shadowy form of a human body. The Prince of Darkness procured his seeming death, and, having fulfilled his appointed mission, he left the completion of the system revealed by him, to the care of Manes, the Persian—the promised Paraclete.

The substance of the new doctrine appears to have been, that the body, being composed of corrupt matter, is naturally evil, and attempts to defeat the aspirations of its celestial prisoner, the soul. Sin, therefore, is nothing more than the obeying the inclinations of the body, which ought to be mortified and chastised by fasting, and other acts of discipline, in order to diminish its influence, and restrain its importunities. Those, therefore, who, by extravagant austerities, succeed in vanquishing the frailties of their corporeal foe, shall depart, after death, to the moon, where they undergo a lustration, by means of water, which purifies still more their nature, and renders them capable of essaying the last probation—that of fire, which will take place in the sun. Having passed, successfully, through these two stages of being, they enter the dwelling of Eternal Light, leaving their corrupt and evil bodies to return to their former state.

A more lengthened trial, however, awaits those who neglect to obey the injunctions of Christ as interpreted and explained by Manes. They must pass through the bodies of different animals, and undergo, in those forms, the amount of pain and suffering that may be deemed necessary for their purification. When this is terminated, a fire shall burst forth and consume the earth, while the Prince of Darkness and his adherents will be delivered over to perpetual misery in the regions of eternal gloom, from which all egress shall be barred by an army of the delivered souls, who will also prevent all farther invasions of the realms of light.*

These opinions were intrusted for propagation to the zeal of several grades of ministers, answering in degree to the orders of the church. A president, who was said to represent

* This account of the system of Manes has been adopted from Mosheim, *Ecc. Hist. Cent. iii.*, and Beausobre, *Histoire du Manichéisme*.

Jesus Christ, exercised patriarchal authority over twelve apostles or metropolitans, who, in their turn, directed the operations of seventy-two bishops, and an unlimited number of priests and deacons.

The weakness, or the good sense, of some of his followers obliged the Persian Paraclete to divide his adherents into two classes, one of which devoted themselves exclusively to the sublimer austerities, while their more humble brethren contented themselves with the less ostentatious virtues of sobriety and temperance. The latter were even permitted to taste the sweets of connubial affection, which the more rigid fanatics repelled as a sin.

The doctrines of Manes were too well adapted to the love of mystery, and appetite for austerities, which characterizes the Orientals, not to attract, in spite of their incoherence and absurdity, numerous adherents. The pernicious tenets overran Persia and Mesopotamia, and penetrated even to Europe, where they could scarcely be stifled by the iron hand of Rome. So late as the conclusion of the fifteenth century, they inhabited, in great numbers, the countries of Bosnia and Servia, and reckoned, among their many and powerful protectors, the monarch of the former kingdom.*

If, therefore, we find, in a region adjacent to Persia, a sect resembling, in the main points of their faith, the followers of Manes, we have, to say the least, a strong presumption in favor of the opinion expressed a few pages back. The Yezidees, as Kurds, boast a Persian origin, and they inhabit the very spot where the dogmas of the heresiarch were most popular in the third and fourth centuries. They have no altars, no images, no directly idolatrous worship, which might connect them with an older form of error. In their veneration for Christ, and in their attachment to his followers, they betray the signs of a system founded on corrupted Christianity; while their reverence for fire, light, and the Evil Principle suggest points of resemblance to Manicheism that should not be overlooked. Their baptism is the imitation of a Christian sacrament, while the practice of circumcision, although common, is never considered, to the best of my knowledge, as a religious act. Like the Druses of Mount Lebanon, they appear to have regarded it rather as a means

* Moshcim, Cent. xv. chap. v.

of propitiating, or, perhaps, of deceiving, their Mohammedan tyrants.

It is not, indeed, to be imagined that the Yezidees have maintained untainted the system of Manes. In their veneration for the Evil Principle, they will seem to have exceeded the tenets propounded by him. But it is ever the tendency of error to corrupt itself, and to make its successive developments more evil still. It may be remarked, also, that a savage and uncivilized people are more prone to be influenced by the striking and terrific features of a religious creed, than by its milder lessons and representations. The deity of a barbarous race is generally a celestial warrior, who must be propitiated with human sacrifices and libations of blood. The same predominance of the wild and terrible, over the gentler influences of religion, may be traced in some of the wild legends of the Middle Ages, where the enemy of man plays so striking a part. It will scarcely surprise us, therefore, if the terror inspired by the Evil Principle should, among a rude, uncivilized, and illiterate race, be productive, in time, of a species of veneration, which the mild and beneficent character of the Author of Good had failed in inspiring.

The title of Yezidee, signifying a follower or worshiper of Yezd, the Good Principle, seems to assign to the people who bear it some affinity with the ancient Persians in creed, as well as in race. The tradition of the Mohammedans, which traces the appellation to a wicked khalif of Damascus, may be regarded as an idle fable; but the knowledge that such a legend existed among their sworn enemies may have suggested to a race, not very scrupulous in practicing deception, the policy of changing it for a name derived from the province of Dasen, where great numbers of them were then resident. Farther inquiries into the habits and tenets of the Yezidees may tend to show more points of resemblance between them and the earlier followers of the Persian heresiarch; and, therefore, I may be hardly justified in propounding at any length that, as a theory, which may shortly be established as a fact. I, therefore, turn from the consideration of their doctrines, to make a few remarks on their principal shrine and hierarchy.

The temple of Sheikh Adi is reported to have been formerly a Christian monastery, dedicated probably to Adæus or Adai, the disciple of St. Thaddeus and his coadjutor, in

effecting the conversion of Mesopotamia. The veneration which the present Yezidees blindly pay him is doubtless founded on a tradition dimmed and obscured by time, but derived originally from their Manicheean or Christian ancestors. The inscriptions contained in the temple are quite modern, nor is it certain that the present holders have possessed it for any length of time. Yet that their veneration for Sheikh Adi is evidently a vital part of their creed, is testified by their annual pilgrimage to his tomb. Nor should it be forgotten that, while the sepulchres of St. Thomas and St. Thaddeus have been pointed out, the last resting-place of the Apostle of Mesopotamia has hitherto remained unknown.

The priesthood of the Yezidees comprises three, or at most four, orders of ministers—the head sheikh, who presides over the whole body; the peers, who occupy the second rank; the Kawals and the Fakeers, or Guardians of the Tomb. In the Manicheean hierarchy, we find one more grade, that of the twelve, who were supposed to represent the Apostles of Christ. But it may be doubted whether this was intended to be of permanent duration. Its functions may have ceased when the Manicheeans suspended their more active missionary exertions.

Omitting this second rank or grade, we find four orders in each sect, of which the head Sheikh of the Yezidees will correspond to the President or Patriarch of the Manichees, while the Peers, Kawals, and Fakeers accord with the bishops, priests, and deacons of the Persian heretics. The resemblance might be more fully established, if we knew the names given by the Manichees to these grades of their hierarchy. But the information we possess concerning Manes and his system comes through the medium of Christian writers, who, finding a similarity existing between the grades of the Manichee priesthood and those of the church, accommodated the names used among themselves to express the different orders of the former.

I have thus endeavored to point out a few features of resemblance between the followers of Manes and the votaries of Sheikh Adi. Whether what has been said will satisfy others, I know not; but, after a most careful consideration of the state of the case, I cannot avoid coming to the conclusion that the Yezidees are the only surviving representatives of that widely-extended heresy which proved, in early days,

the most active and dangerous opponent of Eastern Christianity. The open-hearted hospitality, the kindness and good humor of these poor persecuted people, must excite a wish in the mind of the benevolent and Christian traveler, that the lessons of a purer creed might dispel their superstitions, and imbue them with a clear and perfect knowledge of our divine religion.

It is greatly to be lamented, that some protection from the persecutions of their Kurdish and Turkish enemies cannot be obtained for the unfortunate Yezidees. The hatred of the Mohammedans has ranked them far below the Jews in their charitable estimate of those who differ from themselves, and the option of the Koran or the sword, which the latter may turn aside by the offer of tribute, remains in full force for the unhappy Yezidee.

"They are cursed dogs, who have no revelation nor even a prophet," said a Moslem to me one day, when speaking of the Yezidees; "why should you lament over their fate? For myself, the killing of them would be as the killing of a wild beast."

It must, however, in candor be acknowledged that the Yezidees have not learnt mercy by persecution, but have treated with wanton cruelty those of the Moslems who have fallen into their hands. They have invariably spared the Christians, and when the massacre of the Nestorians drove many hundreds of unhappy fugitives to Mosul, they received shelter and protection at the tomb of Sheikh Adi.

Early in the morning, I bade adieu to the delightful valley and its kind inhabitants, and ascended the mountains in a northerly direction. My road was steep, but surrounded with plantations of oak, whose verdant foliage reminded me of scenes far away. I was quietly musing on the Yezidees and their history, when my mule made a false step, and I found myself suddenly rolling on the ground. Fortunately, we had nearly reached the summit, and I was deposited on a heap of dry leaves, the accumulation of many weeks. The mention of this fall might sound somewhat strange to European readers if I did not explain its cause. I determined to eschew the use of a saddle on leaving Bagh Sheikha, and had latterly bestrode my coverlet only, which was balanced on the back of the mule by a pair of saddle-bags. On this easy and comfortable seat I had traveled for some miles, but the

late catastrophe admonished me that some kind of girth was absolutely necessary for mountain roads. A piece of rope, which we had brought with us, answered the purpose tolerably well, and I reached the other side of the range without any further accidents.

We were now again at the foot of the Gordyæan Mountains, riding along the edge of the plains of Nineveh, in the direction of the great Chaldean monastery of Rabban Hormuzd. As we proceeded, Toma pointed out the remains of seven or eight ruined villages, formerly inhabited by Yezidees. Where were their late occupants? Murdered or captives. Far away in exile they longed in vain, it may be, for a sight of those distant mountains which they were never again to behold, or pictured in the tablet of memory that fair and fertile valley, with its gently murmuring rivulet and its holy tomb.

At length we arrived at the entrance to the winding pass, within which stood the convent of Rabban Hormuzd. It terminated in a wide semicircular ravine, round which wound a steep and circuitous path. The rain had begun to fall heavily before we accomplished the half of the ascent, and a thick, mist-like vapor filled the hollow formed by the semicircle of rocks. Blinded by these mists, we were obliged to remain stationary, as the mules seemed indecisive, and we could hardly discern our path. At length, the deep tone of the summons to prayers sounded from the convent, the mules pricked up their ears and moved forward, while the mist suddenly disappeared, and soon, as if a veil or curtain had been gradually withdrawn, we discovered the form of the monastery before us, and perceived a body of monks, who were issuing forth from the great gate to meet and welcome us. The good fathers were well acquainted with Toma, and in a few minutes I was occupying a comfortable cave, within whose rocky walls the early Christian converts had often, it is said, found a refuge from their pagan and Magian persecutors.

CHAPTER XIII.

Rabban Hormuzd. Ecclesiastical customs of the Chaldeans. Language.
Extracts from the Liturgy of the Nestorians. Images. Excommunication.

THE Chaldean monastery of Rabban or Saint Hormuzd occupies a rocky ledge or platform, on the side of one of the mountains of the Judi range. It is surrounded on all sides by lofty eminences, and looks over the semicircular recess which I have alluded to in the last chapter. The buildings connected with the establishment are arranged in no regular order, so that much of the effect which might be produced by a skillful and judicious grouping of the different edifices has been neglected. Still there remains enough to make the view of the convent and its offices an agreeable and striking prospect, when contemplated from the entrance of the ravine. The church and the adjacent buildings seem, as it were, to spring out of the barren side of the mountain, their white walls contrasting vividly with the dark ground behind. Above, appear the signs of cultivation in the shape of several vine plantations, which are tended by the lay brethren. A narrow and circuitous path gives access to them, and conducts the inquisitive traveler in a short time to the summit of the mountain.

Kas Emmanuel, the abbot, was absent from Rabban Hormuzd, at the time of my visit, but I received a most hospitable welcome from Brother Antonius, the sub-prior. He was a small, spare man, on whose saturnine features mortification, or disgust with the world, had left the traces of melancholy and rigid self-denial. In the East, as in the West, disappointment and misfortunes drive many to the cloister, to brood, in solitude and silence, over sorrows, the recollection of which can rarely be effaced.

Many of the cells of the monks are simply caves hewn in the sides of the mountain, on which their monastery is built. One of these was allotted to me, and I liked it so well that,

when on a subsequent visit, the worthy abbot would have offered me an apartment in his own house, I declined the honor, and begged to be conducted again to my old lodging.

The kindness of my monastic friends showed itself in various little acts of courtesy. One spread my carpet, and brought me a comfortable pillow to recline against; another filled and arranged my pipe, from his own tobacco-pouch; while a third, a lay-brother, assisted my servant in kindling a fire. As it was Lent, the monks were unprovided with meat, but I received, with much thankfulness, a bowl of red lentiles, made into pottage, and called Ades. This is evidently the same with the Adesh of Scripture, the word used in the original Hebrew to signify the red pottage for which Esau sold his birthright to his brother Jacob.* The Ades in question was savory in the extreme, and its odor very tempting to a hungry man. Its taste resembled, exceedingly, that well-known luxury of sailors, pea-soup.

A short time before my visit, the monastery had been attacked by the Kurdish soldiers of Ismail Pasha, of Amadiyeh; who, in wanton barbarity, tore up all the manuscripts which they could find for cartridges, used the altars as targets, and committed various acts of shameful indecency in the church. The monks were seized, and several of their number severely beaten. One was suffering still, at the period of my visit, from the tortures which had been inflicted on him. The Kurds tried to burn the church, but their attempt was frustrated, and, after a stay of some days, they and their valiant commander, who had treated with such unprovoked and unmanly cruelty a few aged and helpless men, thought proper to retreat, laden with booty, to their mountain fortress. The outrage was passed over unpunished, for Mohammed Pasha of Mosul was not inclined to make a formal rupture with the Kurds for the sake of a few Christian monks.

The revenues of the monastery are supplied from the produce of the vineyards and other lands in the vicinity, as well as from the offerings and donations of the surrounding villages, whose churches are served by priests from Rabban Hormuzd. The monastic clergy, therefore, do not always remain in the convent, but each, in his turn, resides for some

* Gen. xxv.

time at any particular village which is indicated by the superior. In like manner, some of our old monasteries, in former times, engrossed to themselves the patronage of many parishes, and were responsible for the due performance of divine service.

Before a portion of the Nestorian community placed themselves under a patriarch, nominated by the Pope, and arrogated to their new sect the distinctive title of the Chaldean church, the monks of Rabban Hormuzd had been the most formidable opponents to Roman usurpation. Private and personal feelings may have borne their share in the active resistance which they offered, for an alteration, or, as they termed it, a reform, of the monastic system had been one of the first steps contemplated by the Italian missionaries. The monks of the older Nestorians, like those of the primitive church, were not required to take a vow of perpetual celibacy.* Men who, from motives of piety or convenience, had entered a monastery, were allowed to quit it, to return to the world, and even to take upon themselves connubial ties, when they found that their inclinations tended that way; like the English fellows of colleges, the early Nestorian monks devoted themselves to the work of education, and the cities of Mosul, Nisibis, and Arbela were deservedly famed for the number of learned doctors and zealous missionaries who had issued from the learned shades of their monasteries. The indignant Assemani can scarcely stifle his wrath while he records such deviations from the Monachins, sanctioned by his church; and though he enumerates their acts of usefulness and cultivation of learning, refuses the title of real and true monks to such erring ecclesiastics. Of late years, however, the opposition offered by the former inhabitants of Rabban Hormuzd to the sway of the pope has been succeeded by passive submission to his authority and that of the Italian missionaries. The monks are now faithful and obedient defenders of the rights of Rome.

I went to visit the church, which, being a mere modern building, possesses little to interest, or to describe. The altars were placed Roman-wise against the wall, and a profusion of pictures and images showed proofs of the departure of the modern Chaldeans from the rigid tenets of their fathers.

* Assemani de Syris Nestorianis.

A sarcophagus of marble, in a small chapel attached to the church, is pointed out as the resting-place of Rabban Hormuzd. The pages of Assemani mention two Persians of that name, one the companion and disciple of Nestorius; and the other a Persian abbot and martyr, who flourished before his time. The inmate of the tomb is said to have been the latter, who, flying with his sister from the persecution of Sapor, dwelt for many years in a cave near the spot where he now lies buried, and occupied himself in preaching the faith to the rude and idolatrous inhabitants of the Gordyæan mountains. His exertions proved so far successful as to excite the rage of the bigoted priests, who stirred up the multitude to seize the holy recluse, and put him to a painful and lingering death.

On leaving the church, I returned to my own apartment, which contained, among other things, a rude altar cut in the rock, where service was performed on certain days in the year. It is said that this cave was in early times the receptacle of the neighboring Christians, who fled thither for a refuge from their pagan persecutors, and performed in darkness and solitude their sacred rites. As the shades of evening drew on, the solitary lamp which hung suspended from the rocky ceiling cast a sad and melancholy light on the rude altar, and the crosses, with other mystical emblems, which pious hands had graven in the hard rock. It was both a scene and a time calculated to produce meditation and solemn feelings, and rarely since have I felt so vividly the luxury of solitude and its sacred inspirations.

In the morning, I visited the library, which was also a cave in the vicinity of my own habitation. The floor was strewn with the torn fragments of manuscripts, and the half burned covers, which had resisted partially the ravages of the destroyer. I am not naturally vindictive, but the sight of this wanton and profitless outrage made me anything but charitably disposed towards its perpetrators. One might excuse the pillages of savage marauders, who, from their cradle, had been accustomed to look upon theft as a virtue; but the destruction of that which might have enlightened and benefited thousands, to satisfy a savage bigotry and unprovoked hatred of Christians, can find no palliation or defence.

The monks were busily engaged in copying such of the fragments as were legible, on paper prepared in a peculiar

manner, and resembling parchment in its appearance. The ink which they used was remarkable for its fine glossy color, which promised well for durability. They wrote with reeds, and, dispensing with a table or desk, rested the paper on the knee.

The Chaldean character is difficult to form, and renders the movements of the transcriber necessarily slow. It is an alteration or adaptation of the old Estrangelo or ancient Syriac letters, but differs little from its original. It is said that formerly the Eastern and Western Syrians used the same forms, but that the present mode of writing the Chaldean was introduced by Joseph Huzita, who succeeded Narses in the school of Nisibis.*

The radical structure of the Chaldean differs so slightly from the Aramaic or Western Syriac, that they may be considered almost as one language. Yet there exists a marked distinction in the pronunciation of the two. The vowel point, *zakopho*, which the Westerns sound like *o*, the Chaldeans enunciate as a broad *a*. Thus, the words rendered by the Syrians *Eloho Bro* and *Nuro*, are sounded by the Chaldeans *Eloha Bra* and *Nura*, a difference sufficiently remarkable to cause some confusion in a conversation carried on between those who follow the different modes of pronunciation. This dissimilarity between two dialects which have evidently the same origin seems to have been of early date. In Ezra iv. 7, we find a passage, the mysterious wording of which appears to require the admission of this difference to interpret it aright. It is said that, "in the days of Artaxerxes wrote Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their companions, unto Artaxerxes, King of Persia, and the writing of the letter was written in the Syrian tongue and interpreted in the Syrian tongue."

The apparent tautology of the above is explained by the supposition that the characters of the epistle were those common to Eastern and Western Syria, while the words were read before the king, and explained to him according to the pronunciation of the Assyrians and Chaldeans, who both seem to have used one language similar in substance to that employed in the offices of the Chaldean Church, and entitled the Chaldee or Chaldaic.

Besides the pure and elegant idiom in which the services

* Gregory Bar Hebræus, as cited by Assemani de Syria Nestoriana.

and theological treatises of the Chaldeans are written, there is a kind of vulgar *patois* spoken by the Christian villagers around Mosul, and by the Nestorians of the Tiyari mountains. It is called *Fellahi*, or the laborer's dialect, and bears the same relation to the ancient language that the modern Romaic does to the Hellenic. Among themselves, the Christians of the plains constantly use this jargon in preference to Arabic, which they consider of infidel origin; and the ordinary Nestorians know no other medium of communication, except when they have dealings with the Kurds, at which times the necessary conversation is carried on in Kurdish. I have been told in Mosul that the dialect of the mountain Nestorians approaches nearer to the written language, and is of a more grammatical and elevated character, than that spoken by the Chaldeans of the plains. The Ecclesiastics use both the literary and colloquial dialects in conversation, though some of them are not very well acquainted with the former.

During my residence in the monastery, I frequently attended the services performed by the monks, and gained from them much information respecting the forms and ceremonies of the Chaldean church. Their chants, though generally harsh and unmusical to a European ear, sometimes exhibited tones of a plaintive and mournful character that were not unpleasing. Unlike the generality of Eastern singers, who seem unaccountably to confound shouting with devotion, the recitative of the monks of Rabban Hormuzd was of a more quiet and dignified kind.

I am no admirer in general of the doings of the Church of Rome in these parts, but I cannot in candor refuse to the Italian instructors of the Chaldeans the praise of having introduced some beneficial improvements. The interior of the church was neat and clean, unlike the generality of Oriental temples, where the dirt and odor would be insupportable, were not the latter dispelled in some measure by the constant use of incense. In the church of Rabban Hormuzd, the operation of Western taste was seen in the absence of the tawdry finery and puerile decorations which disfigure most of the Eastern houses of prayer. It would have been better, perhaps, if this taste had suggested also the removal of sundry wax-dolls, intended to represent the blessed Virgin and other saints, but which tended, in my judgment at least, to degrade and debase a sacred edifice to the level of a baby-house.

The Chaldean Church has always regarded with peculiar veneration the rite of ordination, which, by many writers, has even been described as a sacrament. Ebedjesus of Soba, in his *Nomo-canon*, after enumerating the three grades of bishop, priest, and deacon, proceeds to subdivide each, and to distinguish them as follows: The first grade embraces the simple bishop, whose labors are restricted to the care of a single diocese; the metropolitan, who rules over a certain number of bishops, and the catholicos or patriarch, who was looked up to as the visible head of the whole church. Under the priestly grade are ranked the simple presbyter, the *periodeuta*, whose functions resembled those of the ancient *chorepiscopus*; and the archdeacon, whose rank and duties correspond with those of a similar dignitary in our own church. The third and lowest order embraced the deacons, whose office it is to read the Gospel, to minister the cup, and to assist the priest in the celebration of the eucharist; the *hypodiaconos*, or subdeacon, and the reader, who recited or chanted the lessons in the daily service. The title of patriarch was first assumed by the catholicos of the Nestorians, when the latter withdrew themselves from the jurisdiction of Antioch, after the council of Ephesus, held in A. D. 431.

Many alterations and omissions have taken place in the Nestorian or Chaldean hierarchy since the days of the writer quoted above. The Romanist Chaldeans still retain, at present, the nine grades of ecclesiastics; although, in some places, a slight change has been introduced by the Italian missionaries. Among the independent Nestorians, however, one sole bishop and the patriarch are the only representatives in the *Tiyari* of the episcopal order. While he resided at Mosul, Mar Shimon frequently expressed his sorrow at this fact, and also his determination to consecrate three other bishops as soon as the troubles brought upon him by the Kurdish invasion were at an end.

In former days, all the Nestorian ecclesiastics, including even the bishops and the catholicos were allowed to marry; nor was it considered necessary, as in other Oriental churches, to refuse orders to a person who had been united to two wives in succession.* A somewhat curiously worded canon prescribes the number of times that a priest or deacon may enter

* Assemani de Syris Nestorianis.

into the married state, and fixes the *ultimatum* at seven and a half, with an explanatory remark that the half-wife is to be considered as referring to a widow, while the other seven are to be virgins.* By the Levitical law, on which most of the early canons were founded, it is commanded that a priest shall marry a virgin only, and the same injunction strictly forbids him to contract any alliance with a widow or divorced woman.† The above rule, however, seems to consider the marriage of an ecclesiastic with a widow as lawful, though, from the circumstances under which it was allowed, such a union could seldom take place. The patriarch Marabas was the first who introduced a law that the bishops and catholicos should remain single, yet the marriage of the clergy is acknowledged by Assemani to have been a custom transmitted from the earliest prelates of the Nestorian Church.‡

The sacrament of baptism should, according to the ritual, be preceded by the anointing of the neophyte, and his solemn reception by the church as a catechumen. In the baptism of children, however, the introductory ceremonies are omitted, and the child is at once immersed three times, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The godfather then stands before the entrance to the sanctuary with the infant in his arms, while the priest anoints the forehead with consecrated oil, making upon it the sign of the cross. A white garment is thrown over the newly baptized, and a drop of consecrated wine is given to it from the chalice, a remnant, doubtless, of the old practice of administering the eucharist to children. The anointing after baptism is considered equivalent to our rite of confirmation, and may be performed by a priest, though the oil itself must be consecrated by a bishop. Some of the earlier Nestorians are said to have joined the rite of circumcision to the Christian sacrament of baptism.§

Several of the early Nestorian writers mention an ingredient which they term the leaven of the holy oil and of the eucharist, the history of which is thus related by two writers cited in Assemani :—

When our Lord Jesus was baptized in Jordan by St. John

* Assemani de Syris Nestorianis.

† Lev. xxi. 13, 14.

‡ Assemani de Syris Nestorianis.

§ Ibid.

the Baptist, the latter received the waters flowing from his sacred body in a vessel, which he carefully preserved till the day of his martyrdom, when he gave it over to the keeping of his disciple, St. John the Evangelist. At the Last Supper, our Lord presented a double portion of bread to the latter apostle, who carefully put by a part of it and laid it up together with the vessel of water. During the crucifixion, St. John sedulously collected the drops of blood which flowed from the pierced side of the Redeemer, and mingled them with the water and the bread.

This mixture or leaven was afterwards divided by the apostles among themselves, and was delivered by St. Thomas to Adæus, the Apostle of Mesopotamia and Assyria, from whom it has descended to the Patriarchs of Seleucia, the pontiffs of the Nestorians. It is but fair to observe that the above legend seems to have been received by a few writers only, and does not appear to be generally credited now.

The bread intended for the Holy Communion, which the Nestorians, in common with other Orientals, term the Consecration, and the Unbloody Sacrifice, is ordered by the canons to be made and prepared within the precincts of the church itself.

"Let the priest," says an old canon, "take to him fine flour, with salt, olive oil, and three drops of water, and let him mix it, using at the time certain appointed prayers. Let him do this on a table adorned or prepared for that purpose, and after the Gospel is read, let it be sprinkled with old leaven." This canon, according to Assemani, goes on to refer to the leaven handed down from Adæus, as mentioned in the legend quoted above, but I have omitted this part, because I neither saw nor heard any reference made to it during the making of the bread of which I was an eye-witness at Mosul. In another place, Assemani seems to speak of the legend as now obsolete, but the former part of the canon is to this day observed. The loaf thus prepared is placed upon the altar after the reading of the Gospel.

The majority of Nestorian writers acknowledge only three daily canonical hours of worship founded, as they say, on Scriptural authority. The offering of the lambs, every morning and evening, enjoined by the Levitical law, typifies the morning and evening hours of prayer, while the words of

David, "At midnight I will rise to give thanks to thee,"* warrant the appointment of a night service. The later Nestorians, however, only observe, as far as the laity are concerned, the morning and evening hours. The clergy make it a rule at present to recite the Psalter twice a week, repeating fifty psalms at each nocturn or night office, and the days on which they usually assemble in church for this purpose are Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. On the Saturday night, which they designate by the Jewish title of "the preparation," they recite half the Psalter, and sometimes the whole on solemn occasions.

The eucharist, or Liturgy, is always begun at daybreak. The priest puts on a kind of surplice, in which he recites the preparatory prayers; over this is thrown, at the commencement of the Anaphora or canon, a garment resembling nearly in shape the Roman chasuble, which should be richly embroidered, and marked with a cross at the back. The priest wears a thin strip of embroidered cloth round his neck, disposed like the black scarf worn in our church, but crossed over the breast instead of hanging down, and fastened at the waist with a girdle. The altar on which the elements are placed can only be used once a-day, and must be furnished with a cross and two lights.

Having put on his vestments, the Liturgy begins with the anthem "Glory be to God in the Highest," followed by the Lord's Prayer. Various supplications succeed, after which, the priest kisses the book of the Gospels on the altar, and the deacons exclaim to the people "Bow down your heads." This is followed by other prayers, after which the priest and deacons mount the steps of the altar and arrange it for the reception and celebration of the sacred mysteries.

As so little is known respecting the service of the Nestorians, and their mode of conducting their worship, it may interest my readers to see a few extracts from the Liturgy most commonly used by them on Sundays and festivals days, which is called the Liturgy of the Apostles; not from the twelve, but from Adæus and Mares, the disciples of St. Thomas, who first preached the doctrines of Christianity in Assyria. It is entitled "The Liturgy of the Blessed Apostles, composed by St. Adæus and St. Mares, the Doctors or Instruct-

* Psalm cix. 62.

ors of the Easterns;" and commences with the following rubric:—

The priest approaches to celebrate, and bows himself thrice before the altar, the middle part of which he kisses first, then the right and left extremities, and inclines himself towards the upper part. Afterwards he shall say:—*

Bless, O Lord. Pray for me, my lords, fathers, and brethren, that God may give me power and ability to perform in a suitable manner this ministry, to which I have approached and have entered upon, and that He may receive this oblation at the hands of my unworthiness (which is offered) for me, for you, and for the whole body of the Holy Catholic Church, according to his grace and compassion. Amen.

The people shall answer. May Christ hear thy prayers, and graciously accept thy sacrifice, and receive thy oblation, honoring thy priesthood, and may He grant to us, through thy mediation, the pardon of our faults, and the remission of our sins, through his infinite grace and compassion.

Then the priest shall bow himself towards the lower part of the altar, and shall say:—

May God, the Lord of all, be with each of us according to his infinite grace and mercy. Amen.

Bowing to the deacon, who stands at his left hand, he shall say:—

May God, the Lord of all, confirm thy words, and grant to thee peace, and receive this oblation from my hands for me, and for thee, and for the whole body of the Holy Catholic Church, and for the whole world, through his infinite grace and compassion. Amen.

After some prayers said secretly and in an inaudible tone by the priest, the deacon says:—

Be watchful and attentive. (*The priest then rises and uncovers the elements, taking off the veil with which they were covered. He blesses the incense, and says with a loud voice:)*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us all now and for ever.

The people answer. Amen.

Priest. Let your minds be lifted up.

* At the back of every Oriental altar appears a raised ledge, on which are placed the candles and cross. It is called the Thronos, or throne, and seems to be the same designated in the above rubric as the upper part.

People. They are lifted up to thee, O God of Abraham, and Isaac, and the glorious King of Israel.

Priest. Let an oblation be offered to God, the Lord of all.

People. It is worthy and right.

Deacon. Peace be with us.

Priest. The adorable and glorious Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which created the world through his grace, and its inhabitants through his clemency, which hath saved mankind through his mercy, and hath shown great grace to mortals, is worthy of glory from every mouth—of confession from every tongue—and of exaltation by all creatures. Thousands of thousands of the celestial ones bless and adore thy majesty, O Lord; and tens of thousands of myriads of holy angels, the armies of the spiritual world, with the holy cherubim and the spiritual seraphim, sanctify and celebrate thy name, continually proclaiming and praising thee, and with never ceasing voice exclaiming one to the other.

The people with a loud voice. Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, heaven and earth are full of His glory.

The priest in a low tone. O Lord and mighty God, receive this oblation which we offer to thee for the whole of the Holy Catholic Church, and for all our pious and righteous fathers who have pleased thee, for all prophets and apostles, for all martyrs and confessors, for all that mourn, for the sick and the afflicted, for those who suffer any need or vexation, for all the weak and oppressed, for all the departed, who, being separated from us, have journeyed hence to another region, as well as for all who have requested the prayers of our infirmity, and for me a humble and powerless sinner. O Lord our God, according to thy compassion and the multitude of thy grace, look upon thy people, and upon me, a weak one, not according to my sins and my follies, but (grant) that all may be worthy to obtain the remission of sins through this holy body, which they receive with faith by the grace of thy mercy. Amen.

Then the priest shall say this prayer secretly. But thou, O Lord, for the sake of thy many and unspeakable mercies, remember for good all those of our fathers who were pious and just, and who pleased thee in the commemoration of the body and blood of thy Christ, which we offer on thy pure and holy altar even as thou hast taught us, and grant us thy peace all the days of this life.

He continues. O Lord our God, grant us thy peace and tranquillity all the days of this life, that all the dwellers upon earth may know thee: for thou art God alone, even the true Father, and thou hast sent our Lord Jesus Christ, thy son and thy beloved one; and He, our Lord and God, came and taught us all purity and holiness. Remember the prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, bishops, doctors, priests, deacons, and all the children of the Holy Catholic Church, who have been signed with the sign of life, even holy baptism. We also, thy humble, weak, and ignorant servants, who have met together in thy name, now stand before thee, and receive with joy the form which is from thee—praising, glorifying, and exalting thee. We commemorate and celebrate this great and tremendous, holy and divine mystery of the passion, death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

O Lord, may thy Holy Spirit come and rest upon this oblation which thy servants have offered, to bless and sanctify it, that it may be to us, O Lord, for a propitiation of our faults and for the remission of our sins, and (may it produce) a strong hope for the resurrection of the dead, and a new life in the kingdom of heaven with all those who have been well pleasing in thy sight: we, therefore, will ever praise and glorify thee in thy church, redeemed by the precious blood of thy Christ, on account of thy universal and wonderful dealings with us, with open mouths and a joyful countenance, offering thee a hymn of praise, and giving honor and adoration to thy holy, living, and vivifying name, now and for ever.

The priest signs the mysteries with the cross, and the people answer Amen.

The priest bows himself, and kisses the altar, first in the middle, then at the two sides, and says the following prayer:—

O Christ, the peace of the upper and the great tranquillity of the lower ones, grant that thy peace and tranquillity may dwell in the four parts of the world, but chiefly in the Holy Catholic Church. Grant that the priesthood and the government may have peace. Make wars to cease in all the corners of the earth, and scatter the people who delight in war, that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life, in all temperance and in the fear of God. Have mercy on the sins and transgres-

sions of the departed, for the sake of thy mercy and tender compassion.

Then shall he say to those who are about the altar: Bless the Lord: Bless the Lord.

And he shall put on incense, with which he shall perfume himself, and shall say: O Lord our God, make pleasing the odor of our souls, through the suavity of thy love, and by it cleanse me from the defilements of sin, and pardon my faults and transgressions—both those which I know and those which I know not.

He again takes the incense vessel in both hands, and incensing the mysteries (elements) he says:—

May the clemency of thy grace, O Lord our God, grant us access to these fair, holy, vivifying, and divine mysteries, unworthy as we are to partake of them.

The priest repeats these words once and again, and during each interval joins his hands upon his breast in the form of a cross. He then kisses the altar in the midst, and, taking in both hands the oblation, he lifts it up and says:—

Praise be to thy holy name, O Lord Jesus Christ, and let thy majesty be adored for ever and ever. Amen. For He is the living bread and the life-giving one who descended from heaven, and giveth life to the whole world; and those who eat Him shall not die, and those who receive Him shall be saved through Him, nor shall they feel corruption, but shall live by Him through all eternity. For thou art the antidote of our mortality, and the resurrection of our clay.

Breaking the bread with both hands, he shall say: We approach, O Lord, with true faith, and we break with giving of thanks, and we sign through thy mercy the body and blood of our life-giver Jesus Christ. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

And while he is naming the Trinity, he breaks the bread, which he holds in his hands, and separating it into two parts, he places the piece in his left hand on the paten, and signing the cup with the portion held in the right hand, he says:—

The precious blood is signed with the holy body of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

*The people answer, Amen.**

* The original of the above Liturgy may be found in Renaudot's Collection of Eastern Liturgies.

After the consecration has taken place, a priest and deacon take up their stations at the entrance of the sanctuary, the former holding the paten with the consecrated bread, while the latter takes the cup or chalice. After the clergy have communicated, the people approach one by one, the men preceding the women. A vessel filled with incense is placed near the door of the sanctuary, and as the people walk by it they each pass their hands through the smoke, a kind of symbolical purification for the solemn act which they are about to perform.

The bread is received in the palm of the right hand, placed crosswise over the left, and the cup never leaves the hands of the deacon, who holds it to the lips of each communicant, wiping his mouth afterwards with an embroidered cloth. It is customary to administer the eucharist to children, several of whom I observed among the communicants at Mosul.

The rites of the Romish Chaldeans differ little externally from those of their independent brethren. By both, Divine service is solemnized in the ancient Chaldean language; but the Roman missionaries have inserted into the missal, used by the former, several lines favorable to the doctrine of transubstantiation,* and have introduced the custom of paying adoration to the consecrated bread. In all other particulars, the service remains the same, and many of the Tiyari Nestorians who had been induced to attend the worship of the Romish Chaldeans, found scarcely any difference between it and their own. They, however, objected strongly to the pictures and images which, by degrees, had crept into the churches of Mosul and the neighboring villages.

Auricular confession is practiced among the Romish Chaldeans, but is considered unnecessary by the Nestorians. Yet Ebedjesus, one of their earliest writers, teaches that the penitent should go to the priest's house, and there make a special confession of his sins in order to obtain absolution, citing, in proof, the text, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."† According to Assemani, John Sulaka, who was the first patriarch of the Romish Chaldeans, accused

* Leontius Byzantinus apud Assemani accuses the early Nestorians of teaching that the bread and wine were merely types of the body and blood of Christ.

† St. John xx. 23.

Simon Barmama of having abolished this practice in the Nestorian Church.* Some time after, Joseph II. reproached the Independent Nestorians with their neglect of this rite.

The aversion of the Tiyari people to the use of pictures is very strong, and they found it upon a literal interpretation of the second Commandment. One of them was much scandalized at finding a small print of the queen hung up in my room at Mosul. It was in vain, I observed, that a private apartment was not a church, nor the portrait of an English sovereign an object of worship. My Nestorian friend insisted, with some plausibility, that the Commandment prohibited the making of a graven image, or the likeness of anything, as well as the adoration of it, and seemed by no means satisfied with my excuses.

Excommunication is seldom resorted to among the Nestorians, though very much dreaded when put in force. The person denounced is deprived of civil as well as ecclesiastical privileges, and is considered as lying under the curse of God. Even his nearest relatives shun him, and will hold no communication with him. No one may buy or sell with the offender as long as he remains under the ban. In short, it is considered so fearful a doom that it is only inflicted for great and grievous offences. The Nestorian patriarchs, indeed, seem to use their unlimited authority in a mild and paternal manner. The Chaldean bishops of the plains, however, have made such frequent and unsparing application of the thunders of the church that their flocks begin to lose their respect for the once dreaded denunciations. Yet, even in Mosul, an excommunicated person is generally shunned and avoided.



CHAPTER XIV.

Elkosh. Tomb of Nahum. A Chaldean's account of the Reformation. American traveler. Monastery of St. George. The locusts. An Oriental view of antiquities.

AFTER a stay of two days at Rabban Hormuzd, I took leave of the hospitable monks, and descended to the city of

* Assemani de Syris Nestorianis.

Elkosh, which is distant about two miles from the convent. It was formerly one of the most populous towns in these regions, but is now almost a heap of ruins. From its proximity to the mountains, it has been particularly exposed to the ravages of the Kurds.

I felt much interested in this place, from the fact that it contains the tomb of the Prophet Nahum, who is termed, in Scripture, the Elkoshite and who prophesied, in such striking and terrific language, the downfall of the proud metropolis of the Assyrian kings. The prophet was probably one of the numerous captives carried away by Shalmanaser, who invaded and ravaged Palestine about B. C. 721. The allusions made in Nahum i. 4 seem to justify a belief that the seer was of mature age before he quitted the land of his fathers. If we follow the Scripture chronology, the prophecy of the fall of Nineveh was uttered about eight years after the date of the invasion, and the event must shortly have succeeded to the prediction. Nahum probably lived to witness, with his own eyes, the ruin of the "bloody city."

The tomb of the Prophet is within a mean edifice, consisting of two small chambers. It was covered with a piece of ragged and filthy green baize, on which was lying a manuscript roll, containing the Book of Nahum, in Hebrew. As I lifted it up, to examine it more closely, a large beetle crept from beneath, and hurried across the baize at a rapid pace. The tomb is much respected by the Jews, who make annual pilgrimages to it; and it is, also, held in great esteem by the Christians.

The present city can scarcely contain buildings older than the time of the Mohammedan conquest, although, if the assumption be correct that it was the residence of Nahum, its predecessor must have been coëval with Nineveh. It seems to have been the practice of the Arab invaders to restore or to retain the ancient appellations of cities, contrary to the practice of the Greeks, who were fond of inventing new names for the subjugated towns and districts. The Hellenic titles, however, had a less familiar sound to the ear of an Arab than the old Chaldean or Syrian appellations. The retention of the latter tends to make the identification of ancient and modern places more easy.

I lodged, at Elkosh, in the house of the head man of the Chaldean Christians, a silent and sententious individual, who

spoke little, and smoked much. However, I was not doomed to endure the burden of silence very long, for numbers of the Elkoshites, hearing that a Frank had arrived, came to smoke and talk in my room. Some of these were merchants, who were engaged in the gall nut trade, a production found in abundance among the neighboring mountains. As my visitors were generally Christians, the conversation turned principally on theological matters.

They had, like the people of Bagh Sheikha, a poor opinion of the English. I was often called upon to defend our nation from the charges of polygamy and atheism. They were dreadfully scandalized at our refusing to acknowledge the authority of the Pope, and one gentleman asked me seriously, and with an air of great concern, whether I ever said my prayers! On one occasion, a large party had assembled, among whom was a merchant, recently arrived from Aleppo. In the course of conversation, he began to attack the English.

"The Ingleez," he said, "are a very fierce and intractable nation. They marry many wives, and care very little about Allah, whose name be exalted."

I here interrupted the speaker, and asked if, in the course of his travels, he had ever heard of the English Church.

"Belli, yes," he answered; "I know the whole history of your church. You must understand," continued he, turning to the rest, "that once there lived in England a great sultan whose name was Napoleon Bonaparte. This sultan was like unto Antar and Iskander, the Macedonian, and he made many of the kings of Frangistan his footstool. But his heart was lifted up, and he defied Allah in his pride. And Napoleon's wife was old, and she was no longer pleasing in his eyes. Then it came to pass that he looked upon a certain fair damsel with the glances of love, and he said, 'Inshallah, I will divorce my wife and get me this fair one in marriage. Now, the Ingleez were all Catholics then, and, therefore, Napoleon sent a message to our father the pope, desiring that he would grant him a divorce. But the pope reproved Napoleon for his pride and unkind dealing with his wife, at which the sultan waxed wrath, and said, 'Surely, this pope is no better than Abou Jahash, even the Father of Stupidity; but, Inshallah, I will make him eat abomination.' So he went with many soldiers and besieged Rome, and took *the pope prisoner*, and shut him up in a great tower in Lon-

don, which is the chief city of the Ingleez. But the kings of the Franks all joined together, and made war upon Napoleon Bonaparte, and overcame him. Then their soldiers came to London and set the pope at liberty. And when the pope returned to Rome, he cursed Napoleon, and excommunicated him and all the Ingleez. But Napoleon laughed at his beard, and he said, 'Inshallah, but I will have a church of my own.' So he made bishops, and they divorced his wife, and they married him to the beautiful damsel, after which he founded the English Church."

All the assembly were deeply penetrated and impressed with this narrative, which was delivered with great volubility and lively pantomimic action. I had but little chance of being attended to in my vindication of my country and its religion, for, say what I would, the audience shook their heads doubtfully, and departed full of admiration at the wisdom of the Aleppo merchant, and regarding the English Church as the profane invention of that second Nimrod, Napoleon Bonaparte.

The Aleppo merchant had probably heard some mangled account of Henry the Eighth and Anne Boleyn, while his lively imagination, or the suggestions of some Roman missionary, had supplied the rest. The reputation which Napoleon has acquired in the East would account for his being the hero of the story, more particularly as Orientals are not very exact in their notions of countries and dates. Even the chronology of their own land they know little about, and all time past is divided into two epochs, the period before Mohammed and that which has elapsed since.

Yet, when I came to reflect upon the tale of the worthy Elkoshite, the feelings of contempt for his ignorance were checked by the recollection that few persons in England were much better acquainted with the East, its manners, religion, and history, than the Oriental was with the nature of the Reformation. How often since have I heard well informed persons inquire whether there were any Christians in the East, and express surprise on hearing of the Oriental churches. The Nestorians have, of late, excited a little attention; but the great mass of sympathizers with them know nothing of their history, except that they are a sort of Asiatic Protestants, who read their Bibles and abominate the pope.

Once, an American traveler was journeying to Aleppo in company with an active and intelligent Greek, whose services he had secured at Beyrout. One day, as they halted under some trees, and had spread their carpets for the night's repose, the traveler commenced a long discourse on the excellencies of the New Testament, which contained, he said, the life of Jesus Christ. The Greek listened for some time in astonishment as the loquacious native of the West detailed, with much self-satisfaction, the events of the Gospel narrative; but when the latter drew forth, with an air of importance, a small copy of the Testament and presented it to him as a book which he had never seen or heard of before, he lost all patience, and said, "Kyrie, my nation received that book from the hands of the apostles themselves, and you are indebted to us for it. Have I heard of it, say you? Why, I know the greater part by heart, and I tell you candidly, Kyrie, that with us, as, perhaps, with you, the difficulty is, not to know what the Gospel says, but to practice what it teaches."

I left Elkosh next day upon a most obstinate and perverse mule, who seemed most disinclined to carry peaceably a disciple of the wicked Napoleon Bonaparte. Once he slipped as we were ascending a steep hill, and laid me flat upon my back, which feat having accomplished to his satisfaction, doubtless, he stood contemplating me with an air that seemed to say, "It has served you right, you heretic." I mounted again, and was soon after deposited in a heap of soft mud, close to the door of a worthy Chaldean priest, who came forth, with many exclamations of surprise and sympathy, to rescue me from my uncomfortable couch. He had been educated at the Propaganda College, and spoke Italian fluently. Finding that my clothes still retained many traces of my two falls, he proposed that I should step into his house, and get myself dried and cleansed. I complied with this welcome invitation, and was soon seated at the good presbyter's hospitable board, discussing some fried eggs and a bottle of village wine.

The deportment of my new friend displayed a polish and refinement which formed rather a pleasing contrast to the rude and coarse conduct of the savages of Elkosh, who, I believe, are noted for their *Kurdish manners*. He spoke of Rome with a feeling of regret, though he told me he never *felt himself* quite at home there. He disliked the Italian

cuisine and the Frank dress, and complained that he could seldom enjoy the luxury of smoking. Some ecclesiastical business had led him as far as Paris, but his Eastern gravity did not accord with the gayety of the French, whom he termed the Fathers of motion. Of the English he had heard but little, and that little was to their disadvantage. He considered them evidently as people without a faith, as the Mohammedans of the West.

The house of my worthy host was situated near a village called Tell Eskof, to the north of which he informed me was a larger town or village inhabited chiefly by Yezidees, and called Haterah. The Syrian geographers consider it to be identical with the Calah of Genesis. Eastward of Tell Eskof is another village called Kas-el-ain, or the head of the spring, from a small rivulet which takes its rise near it, and empties itself into the Tigris, to the north of the mound of Kuyunjik. Admitting the latter to have formed part of Nineveh, this stream probably flowed through the city. In Nahum ii. 6, there is an allusion to the gates of the rivers, which seems to indicate that, besides the Tigris, there were other streams which either passed through Nineveh itself, or glided along at the foot of its walls.

From Tell Eskof, I rode on till we arrived at the ruined monastery of St. George, not far from the eastern bank of the Tigris. It had been for some months untenanted, save by a single monk, who received me at the gate, and recommended me to spread my carpet on the floor of a room adjoining the church. The latter contained little that was either interesting or curious. Over the altar was a grim portrait of St. George, slaying a ferocious dragon, that was breathing forth flames from mouth and nostrils, and emitting fountains of blood from various ghastly wounds, any one of which might have deprived an ordinary dragon of life.

The old monk was courteous and communicative. He showed me his books and his priestly garments, which were rather tarnished by frequent wear. At the west end of the church was a kind of gallery, fronting the altar, in which were two desks similar to those that in most Eastern churches are placed in the choir. I asked the reason of this, but could get no satisfactory explanation of the seeming anomaly.

In the course of the afternoon, a Mohammedan from the neighboring village came in, and seemed to be on very friendly

terms with the monk. Both were loud in the praises of St. George, who was feared, they said, even by the Kurds, whom he had restrained on several occasions from burning the monastery. On the eve of his festival, the belligerent saint crosses the Tigris from Mosul, in company with Khudder Elias, both mounted on white horses, and armed *cap à pie*. They scour the plain of Nineveh till daybreak, and woe to him who meets them in their nocturnal ride. I asked the Mohammedan some particulars respecting Khudder Elias, but he only knew that he was a great prophet, and was buried at Mosul. An Arabian geographer mentions that the tomb of the Prophet George stands in the midst of Mosul, and it is probable that he alludes to the great mosque, which the tradition of the inhabitants represents as having been formerly a Christian church. It is likely that the old Nestorian cathedral of the modern Nineveh was dedicated to St. George, and hence the legends respecting him which are so plentiful in the vicinity.

During the evening, three other Mohammedans came in, one of whom was the mollah of the village. They began to talk very loudly against the tyranny and oppression of Mohammed Pasha, who had lately imposed some rather heavy taxes on their village. The following colloquy ensued between us.

Mollah.—“When are your people coming to take the country?”

Myself.—“I can hardly tell you, seeing that, to the best of my knowledge, they have no intention of doing anything of the kind. But tell me, O mollah, you who are a servant of the prophet and a priest of his religion, why should you wish that the Franks and Christians might bear rule over you?”

Mollah.—“Kowajah,* God is great, and knows all things. If it be His will that we should become Christians, or that Islam should fall, He can bring it to pass, whether we desire the change or no. Why, then, should we be anxious for the future destiny of religion when the exalted One takes care of it? We are blind, and know nothing.”

Another.—“I have heard say our mosques were once Christian churches, and, Allah knows, they may be so again. Any-

* Sir.

thing, however, is better than the tyranny of this dog of a pasha. May he sleep in Gehennam!"

Mollah.—"Mohammed Pasha is, in one respect, a just man; he robs Jews, Christians, and Moslem alike. A year ago, he sent for a student of my acquaintance, a humble and holy man. 'Oh, man,' said he, 'it grieves me to hear that you are behind with the salian.' 'I am poor, O pasha,' was the reply, 'and my patrimony is small. My crop, also, has not been prospered by Allah, and the Kurds have carried off several of my sheep.' The pasha grew wroth like a sheitan as he is, and interrupting the student he roared out, 'You dog, you unclean, pay you shall, or the bastinado shall compel you.' So the poor man returned home in great fear, and he had to sell his books to meet the demand. Shall such a Moslem as this go to Paradise? Shall he not rather be thrust down to the lowest pit of Gehennam, even below the accursed Jews?"

Myself.—"But the Cadi and Mufti of Mosul; surely they are, or ought to be, good Mussulmen; can they not help you, or moderate the tyranny of the pasha?"

Mollah.—"Kowajah, the pasha is a drunken infidel; and as for the cadi and mufti, they, excellent men, are worse than he!"

I was somewhat surprised to hear sentiments like these uttered by Mohammedans so near the residence of the dreaded pasha. Bad as the Turks are, however, they have not imitated the evil example of certain more civilized and Christian governments. The movements of the oppressed are at least free, nor are his words watched by some lurking spy and made a matter of accusation against him.

I remember on one occasion a butcher was condemned to have his ear nailed to his own door-post. The sentence was executed with small consideration for the feelings of the sufferer, who, however, indemnified himself by heaping a torrent of abuse on the cadi, mufti, and the pasha himself. No notice was taken of what he said; but when the term of his sentence had expired, he was released, and allowed to depart unmolested. Perhaps, however, when the Turks become a little more civilized, they will adopt the system of espionage, with some other European improvements which they lack at present.

From the monastery we repaired the next morning to the

bank of the Tigris, where we embarked in one of the clumsy ferry-boats, and after a passage which lasted a full hour at least, we arrived in safety at the eastern entrance of Mosul. A peasant from one of the villages had preferred the ancient mode of transit. Inflating two bags of skin which he carried in his hand, he supported himself upon them, and with his feet propelled himself across the river. Oppressed by the heat of the mid-day sun, and tired of the dilatory movement of the vessel, I almost envied him his cool and refreshing bath.

Soon after my return, I was standing on my terrace when my attention was attracted by what seemed to be a moving cloud. A dark compact body of insects came floating along from the west, while here and there a straggler lingered behind the others, and, after vain attempts to join the main column, fell exhausted on the terrace before me. I took up one of these in my hand, and was soon watching, with mingled curiosity and compassion, the last moments of an expiring locust. Despite their destructive qualities, I could not help pitying the poor weary insect, who, after a flight of so many miles, was doomed to sink down with the land of plenty before his eyes. A few minutes longer and he would have been banqueting with his more fortunate brethren on the olive trees of Bagh Sheikha, or the corn-fields of old Nineveh. I placed a drop or two of water in the palm of my hand; he seemed to drink eagerly of the refreshing element; but his brief span of life was closing, and I laid him down to die.

As the locusts proceeded, great numbers of them fell and covered the terraces of the city in heaps. Their color was a darkish yellow, and they were about an inch and a half in length. Their whole appearance resembled very much that of a grasshopper.

The last straggler had crossed the Tigris, and the people around all appeared on the neighboring terraces furnished with large baskets, into which they threw whole heaps of the dead and dying insects. I was not sorry to get rid of them, on account of the stench which arose from their rapidly decaying bodies. The putrefaction of unburied locusts is said to have been the cause of plague in various parts of Asiatic Turkey. Their ravages are much dreaded, for they leave all the trees quite bare, stripping off even the hardest bark. I have heard that on some occasions they have entered houses *in a body*, and consumed everything that they could find.

My knowledge of Arabic was now progressing, and I was able to understand and converse with most of the numerous visitors who made calls upon me. Among those was an old Mohammedan merchant, whose quiet habits I liked, and whose visits were seldom protracted to any length of time. My friend Mohammed was a widower, and had two sons, very fine lads, whom he was proud of characterizing as two of the greatest sheitans in Mosul. The old gentleman loved stories to distraction, and often importuned me to relate what I had seen in my travels. He himself had smoked and dosed away fifty years in Mosul, during which time he had never been outside either of the gates. Sometimes two or three of his friends would accompany him. They were a silent race, devoted to their pipes and coffee, and knowing or caring little about anything exterior to their own little world.

When I mentioned to Mohammed the excavations of Khoorsabad, he ruminated for a moment, and then asked me, in a confidential tone, how much gold the French Balios* had discovered. When I told him that M. Botta neither sought for, nor expected, anything more valuable than some ancient sculptures, my worthy old friend looked grievously disappointed, and, after a few thoughtful puffs, said:—

“I have often been astonished, O Yacoub, that a people, so wise and intelligent as it must be admitted the Franks generally are, should take such delight in old stones. Praise be to God, I know nothing of Nimroud and Athoor that you have been telling me of, except that one of them put our Father Ibraheem, upon whom be peace, into a great furnace, from which he miraculously escaped. They were both Kafirs, and have doubtless been roasting in Gehennam for many years on account of their misdeeds; so why should you or I trouble our heads about them? Did I not know that the Ingleez are a truth-speaking nation, I should suspect that you were telling me falsehoods when you assure me that crowds of people in your country go to gaze upon these idols. I have heard that they of your nation curse the other Christians who worship images; and I know that Musa, the Prophet, was charged by Allah, the Exalted, to forbid the making of such abominations. Why, even the mountain Nestorians would not suffer a picture in their houses; and are you less wise than they?

* Consul.

"I remember I once went to the house of a Frank who passed through here a little time ago, and he received me with great honor. We sat down together in peace, and were quietly smoking when a dog of a Jew brought some worn and rusted coins, for which I would not have given a para. The Frank acted as if the father of the Djin (genii) had possessed him. He leaped from his sofa like one who had discovered a treasure. He viewed the rubbish as if it had been some beautiful damsel, and gave the old thief of a Jew a sum which would have kept my household for a week. The cunning rogue departed, laughing in his sleeve—may confusion rest upon him!—and the Frank left me hastily, without saying 'Peace be with you,' to examine his purchase. I asked the servant if they were relics or pictures of saints that his excellency worshiped, but he only laughed at my beard. Verily, the Franks are a strange people."

After this speech, a long one for him, my old friend kept silence till the sound of the muezzin's voice summoned him to quit his beloved pipe. His sentiments, however, represent accurately the feelings of his countrymen with regard to antiquities.

Even my friend —, one of the most intelligent Orientals I ever met, and a person well acquainted with European habits and tastes, could not account for or enter into our admiration for antiquities. "When I was in Rome," said he to a countryman, "I found the Franks more attentive to these old pagan images than to the rites of their own worship. The churches were deserted, and the museums and galleries thronged. These Westerns seem to pay the same devotion to a statue or an antique that we do to the blessed saints."

I think it was St. Jerome who once said, addressing our European ancestors: "The churches are adorned with costly marbles and pictures, which every one flocks to admire. God and purple are lavished on senseless structures, while the poor of Christ, the living image of the great Creator, are abandoned to suffering and neglect. Would that you who make so much of an inanimate mass of marble would feel for the miseries of the moving and breathing statue!"

The Easterns at least do not merit the application of the latter portion of the sentence.

CHAPTER XV.

Easter. A death and funeral. Kas Botros and Kas Michael. The Christian fugitive. The merchant of Baghdad. Religious parties of Mosul. A reformer. A baptized Mohammedan.

THE season of Lent is rigorously observed by the Christians of the Oriental churches. Few of them touch any food till after mid-day, when they take a slight repast, which sustains them until sunset. The close of the period of mortification was drawing nigh at the time of my return to Mosul, and men and women were looking forward with no small satisfaction to the celebration of the Easter festival. The pope had sent an indulgence to his Chaldean children, in virtue of which the severity of the fast was to be in some measure mitigated; but they had declined to avail themselves of the favor, as it was deemed an infringement of ancient customs.

Easter came at last, and we distinguished it by a feast at the English Consulate, in which that noted dish of the Arabian Nights, lamb stuffed with pistachio nuts, formed no unimportant item of the repast. Prayers had previously been said in our little chapel, and after dinner we walked abroad to pay the compliments of Easter to our numerous acquaintance. Their feast, however, did not occur till some days after, when the whole of the Christian population appeared abroad dressed in their gayest habiliments, which were set off by their happy and joyous countenances. Friends stopped in street to greet one another with the glad announcement, "Kam el Meseeh, the Christ, has risen;" while the wealthy and respectable made the hearts of their poorer brethren joyful with their donations of money and rice.

Yet amidst the universal joy one heart at least in Mosul was feeling the most poignant affliction. Mr. —, one of the American missionaries, had long been struggling with a malignant and incurable disorder, and the echo of the mirth called forth by the high and joyous festival had scarcely died

away before his wife found herself a lonely widow in the midst of a strange country. The last breath had not long left the body of the departed when his friends were called upon to solemnize his funeral obsequies. The Chaldean clergy, instigated by the Italian missionaries, had refused even a grave to one whom they considered a heretic; but the Syrian Jacobites came forward and offered to bestow alike a place of burial and the rites of their church on the stranger from a distant land.

The whole of the Europeans in Mosul accompanied the mournful cortège as it defiled slowly through the narrow streets of the city to the Syrian church. The coffin was placed before the altar, with lights at each end, and the numerous assemblage listened in solemn silence to the deep-toned chant of the priests and deacons who recited those passages from Scripture which contain the accounts of the burial of Sarah and of Jacob.

After a brief ceremony, the bearers took up their load once more, and conveyed it to an open grave in the cemetery attached to the church. A prayer from one of the missionaries followed, and the remains of their brother were lowered into their final resting-place. The deceased had been generally beloved on account of the kindness and amiability of his manners, and even those who differed widely from him in creed could hardly restrain themselves from bestowing a tear to the memory of one whose piety and humility had endeared him to all.

Soon after this mournful event, two Chaldean priests, Kas Michael and Kas Botros, arrived at Mosul. In the latter, I had the pleasure of greeting an old Maltese acquaintance, and one of the most talented members of the Oriental priesthood I ever encountered. He had formerly belonged to the Romish Syrians, but, from long study and examination, had come to the conclusion that the doctrines of the Church of England were purer than those of Rome, or of any Oriental community. He had been in great danger from the machinations of his enemies, who had seized already a small estate which he possessed, near Aleppo, and would willingly have incarcerated his person, also, had he not obtained the protection of the English consul. Kas Michael was a Chaldean, and had formerly been a monk at Rabban Hormuzd.

Kas Botros had taken up his abode at my house, and was

accompanied thither by a poor Christian from Aleppo, who had been much persecuted on account of some property which a merciless Mohammedan was endeavoring to wrest from him. The day after his arrival, a kawass of the pasha appeared, to demand his person of me. Having, however, ascertained the injustice of the case, I determined to act upon the maxim that every Frank's house is his castle, a piece of traditional law generally recognized in Turkey. I accordingly bolted the outer door, and answered the knocking of the kawass from a small terrace that overlooked the street.

"Khowajah Yacoub," said the official, "I am sent from his excellency, the pasha, to enter your house, and to seize the person of a runaway debtor who has taken refuge there. Will you open the door?"

"Assuredly I will not," was my reply. "Am I your porter, O man! Make your way in, if you are able, but I draw no bolt for you!"

"Very well; I shall return to-morrow," said the kawass, as he departed.

No time was to be lost. I gave the poor Christian a small sum, by means of which he bribed the guard at the gate, and before his persecutors returned, the next morning, he was on his way to Baghdad. I ordered my servant to admit them; but their search was, of course, ineffectual, and they retired, muttering no very complimentary comments on my conduct. Old Mohammed, who was, as usual, enjoying his pipe on my diwan, was highly amused, and laughed heartily when the intruders had departed.

"Verily, you are a sheitan, Khowajah Yacoub," said he.

That I may do the Mohammedans full justice, however, I will relate an instance of rare and unexpected generosity, which took place some time before my arrival at Mosul.

A poor Christian merchant of the latter place had been unfortunate in his speculations, so much so, indeed, that there was no prospect of satisfying his numerous creditors, among whom was a rich Mohammedan merchant of Baghdad, that he had only seen once or twice. At length his affairs became in such an embarrassed state that he had no money left, so that, when one of his Mosul creditors came to his house, and insisted upon being paid, the poor man was driven to his wits' end.

"May Allah and the Virgin assist me!" he exclaimed; "I know not what to do or to say."

"Pay me my debt, O Christian dog!" roared the inexorable creditor, "or by Allah you shall be dragged to prison, where you will eat stick without measure or limit."*

"Have pity upon me, miserable wretch that I am!" supplicated the unhappy debtor. "Give me but a little time, and I will endeavor to satisfy your demand."

"By our holy prophet," was the reply, "I will not grant your request, O unclean; and hear me—if the money is not paid before to-morrow, at noon, you will find yourself in prison and in chains."

With this menace the angry creditor departed, leaving his unfortunate debtor to no very enviable reflections. All the miseries which he might expect would be heaped upon him before another sunset came in succession before his agitated mind. He was sensible that he had to look forward, not merely to loss of liberty, but to tortures and torments which every rigid creditor in the East has the power of inflicting. His faith, also, would be an additional offence in the eyes of his persecutors, who, instigated by their bigotry, consider mercy to a Christian almost as a crime. His wife and children, too, must be left defenceless and alone, exposed to all the temptations and privations of helpless indigence. It was a sore moment for the poor man, and when he saw his favorite little daughter running up the stairs of the terrace to embrace him, he felt, as he pressed her to his bosom, that he could almost rejoice if the holy angels bore her away that instant from a world of sorrow.

The sight of a raft making ready for its voyage down the river to Baghdad turned his thoughts to his rich creditor in that city. He had heard him well spoken of as a man of generous and liberal character, and one who was humane and charitable to all who were in need. "But he is a Moslem," reflected the poor Christian, "and, like the rest of his sect, would be but too glad to trample on the despised Nazarene."

At this moment, a strong temptation came into his mind. If he could obtain a few days' delay, a wealthy relative at

* To eat stick is a metaphorical expression for the *bastinado*. It is not, as may be imagined, a very digestible species of food.

Diarbekir had promised him the loan of a sum sufficient to discharge his present debts in Mosul, and he would then be saved from the dreaded prison and the tortures. What if he gave his pressing creditor an order upon the merchant at Baghdad for the money he demanded? The time occupied by the voyage there, and the journey back, would afford ample leisure for a trusty messenger to go to Diarbekir and to return with the advanced loan, from which he could both pay the debt and silence his creditor, whom he knew to be an avaricious greedy man, with such a present as would appease his anger at the bootless errand.

He thought over his plan all night, and although at first his conscience reproached him with intended duplicity, its remonstrances were overpowered by the cruel images of future suffering which his mind had conjured up. The result of his cogitations was that he determined to carry it into execution.

Early the next morning, he rose from broken and uneasy slumbers, rendered more uneasy by visions of chains, gloomy dungeons, and scourges. Very welcome was the cool breeze that played upon his fevered cheek as he leaned on the wall of his balcony; and his aching eye wandered over the mounds of Nineveh to the distant Kurdish mountains, the abode of the free.

"Should the worst happen, I can escape thither with my family," he thought. "The Nestorians, our ancient brethren, will afford shelter and protection to an oppressed fugitive; and even the Kurds are not fond of delivering up one who has sought the shadow of their roofs."

His meditations were interrupted by the unwelcome voice of his creditor in the court below. He descended to meet him, and endeavored to put on the air of a man who, though unfortunate, is not wholly destitute of resources.

"Salaam Khowajah Ibraheem," he said, "I have thought over our conversation yesterday, and I must certainly avow that I am able to pay your demand, though it will much inconvenience me. I have intrusted a sum to Suleiman Aga at Baghdad, with which he is to purchase for me some merchandise from El Hind. The vessels do not arrive till after at least fourteen days, so that he has the money still in his hands. Yet the payment of this sum will greatly distress me, seeing that I have no immediate means of replacing

what I had destined to be the price of the Indian goods, which I must therefore lose the opportunity of purchasing if you refuse to wait."

Ibraheem listened to his speech with increasing satisfaction, for he knew that a bill on Suleiman was like so much gold, and, as he had occasion to go to Baghdad on affairs of his own, the voyage would not much signify. He replied, therefore, in as conciliatory a tone as he could assume, that he was grieved that his own necessities obliged him to insist on instant payment: but he secretly chuckled to himself as he placed in the bosom of his gown the paper which the Christian had just written with a trembling hand. He was indeed so full of self-congratulation that he did not observe the pale mournful expression of his debtor, who, after his departure, threw himself on his diwan, and, covering his face with his hands, wept long and bitterly.

Days rolled on, but, although a messenger had been dispatched to Diarbekir the very morning of Ibraheem's departure, and had been charged to ride as if Azrael were behind him, he tarried and came not. At length, the Christian received the intelligence that Ibraheem had returned, and was even then entering the Baghdad gate of Mosul. The poor Nazarene trembled at the prospect of his wrath. He made an attempt to escape that very night: but his excellency the pasha, from some caprice or other, having given orders that no one should leave the city, he was rudely repulsed by the guardians of the gate. Returning to his house, he spent the night in fear and agitation, scarcely knowing what course to adopt. At length, he determined to go to Ibraheem, confess the fraud he had practiced, and surrender himself to his vengeance.

The morning breeze was blowing cool and refreshing from the mountains of Kurdistan, as he set forth, the next morning, on his unpleasant errand. More than one church was open, and the worshippers were pouring in for the morning prayers. The poor merchant entered, and joined in the service; and when it was over he bent his burning forehead to the cool marble pavement, and prayed earnestly for deliverance from peril, and that He, who sways the thoughts of all men, would soften the stony heart of his adversary, and incline him to compassion and pity.

He left the church, and, quickening his pace, arrived at

the house of Ibraheem just as that person was crossing his own threshold to go forth to his daily avocations. To the astonishment of the Christian, the countenance of his creditor became radiant with the most cringing civility.

"Djanum, O my soul!" said he, "you are welcome to the dwelling of the unworthy Ibraheem. Will you not honor me by entering and drinking a pipe,* since it is yet early, and to a guest like you all business must give place."

The Christian stared in utter amazement at Ibraheem while he uttered this complimentary address. "Verily," he thought within himself, "the Djin of Babel, which I have heard of from the Holy Writings, must have possessed the man." He restrained his astonishment, however, and sat down as invited.

"O, my friend," said the obsequious Ibraheem, as he handed to his guest with a low bend the pipe which he had lit, "why did you not tell me that you are even as the brother of Suleiman Aga. Evil light upon my head that I should behave with such rudeness to the friend of so excellent a man."

"You speak parables, O Ibraheem!" said the surprised Christian.

"I say what is the truth," replied his host. "I went to Baghdad with your paper, and my first care was to repair to Suleiman Aga. Mashallah! what a house is his! On my head, it is far larger and more beautiful than the palace of our pasha! Well, I entered into the court and saw a number of mendicants, Christians as well as Mohammedans, who were receiving from the servants large bowls of rice. 'Has something extraordinary occurred, O man!' said I to one of the beggars who stood near me, 'that this distribution is taking place?' 'It happens daily,' he replied. 'May God grant long life to Suleiman Aga! He is the father of the poor.'"

"I then signified to one of the slaves, a stout black, whose cheeks were as well stuffed as the cushions of my best diwan, that I wished to see Suleiman Aga.

"'Follow me, my master,' he replied, and led the way

* The Orientals use the word "drink" in lieu of "smoke." It arises probably from the fact that the first pipes invented were those termed *narguilehs* or *hookahs*, in which the smoke, drawn through water, is inhaled by the smoker in a manner which much resembles the act of drinking.

into a large room, where, reclining on cushions richly embroidered, sat the prince of the Baghdad merchants. I made a low obeisance, and would have taken my seat at the lower end of the room, but Suleiman motioned me to sit by his side. Pipes and coffee were served, and, after a few compliments, I related the object of my journey and produced your document. Suleiman seemed surprised as he read it carefully through; but, after pondering awhile, he said, 'Tell me the circumstances under which you received this paper.' Whereupon I told him all that had happened between me and yourself. When Suleiman had heard my tale, his countenance grew stern, and he said, 'O Ibraheem, you have been hard and severe upon my friend and my brother; nevertheless, here is your money and something besides for the expenses of the journey. Return to Mosul, and tell the Christian merchant that in a month's time from the present day I expect to see him beneath the shadow of my roof.' I began to excuse myself, but Suleiman stopped me. 'The heart of the covetous,' he said, 'is like the ocean: it can never be filled. Depart in peace, and henceforth learn to show mercy to the unfortunate.' Ashamed, I left his presence and returned to Mosul. My intention was to seek you out to-day and relate what had occurred; though doubtless Suleiman Aga, your excellent friend, has already made it known to you by letter. I must have been medjnoon* to have treated so worthy a man as yourself in so rude a manner, but I trust that you and your brother Suleiman Aga will pardon me."

Soon after, the Christian merchant left the house, astonished beyond measure at the munificence of Suleiman Aga. He could hardly believe that one, almost a stranger, would have befriended him in such a manner, or that a Mohammedan would have given help and assistance to a Christian. Penetrated with gratitude, he rushed into the nearest church and gave vent to his feelings in energetic and heartfelt thanksgivings. Afterwards he went to his house, took a hasty farewell of his family, and embarked on a raft that was just then leaving for Baghdad. When he arrived at the City of Peace, he hastened to the house of Suleiman, and, throwing himself at his feet, confessed at once the imposition and entreated his forgiveness.

* Mad.

The prince of the Baghdad merchants bade him rise and be seated, assuring him that the past was pardoned and forgotten. He even invited him to take up his quarters for a few days at his house, and bestowed upon him some magnificent robes in lieu of his travel-stained vestments. After dinner, when they were alone, the Christian was profuse in his expressions of gratitude, and ventured to hint his surprise that a stranger should confer a benefit so costly on one utterly unknown to him.

"O my brother," said Suleiman, "Allah, the Exalted, is the father of us all, and has committed the poor and the unfortunate to the care of the wealthy and the prosperous. When we aid the misfortunes of one another, and supply from our own abundance the deficiencies of our fellow men, we do but relieve those who are closely related to us by the ties of nature and position. The showing of compassion renders us like to Him whose chosen title is El Raham, the Merciful One."

"But I am a Christian, O Suleiman," said the Mosul merchant, "and the professors of your creed deem us worse than the dogs of the streets."

"The Maker of all," was the reply, "has caused the birds to differ in the color of their plumage, and men in their opinions; but both the Koran and the Injeel agree in enjoining charity and mercy."

The day after, the Christian left for his native city, bearing with him a large sum lent him by the munificent Suleiman, who proved ever afterwards his sure and stanch friend. The aid so seasonably rendered enabled him to retrieve his losses, and to repay in a short time the money advanced, as well as the original debt. Mindful of the lesson taught him by the liberality of the Mohammedan, he endeavored in after life to imitate his example; bestowing his bounties on all who needed them, without any distinction of religion or sect. Among the objects of his charity was his former creditor, Ibraheem, who became unfortunate in his old days, and was indebted to the kindness of the man whom he had persecuted for an asylum in his time of need. At a good old age, the worthy merchant slept with his fathers, and the corpse was accompanied to its last resting-place by crowds of the unfortunate and the miserable, who lamented with sincere and

unfeigned grief the loss of their munificent benefactor and friend.

The priests Botros and Michael very soon found it necessary to move from my house to one in the middle of the quarter inhabited chiefly by the Chaldean Christians. Their arrival at Mosul had created no small stir, and the Italian missionaries instigated the clergy of the town to curse them from their altars, and to prohibit, under pain of excommunication, any person from holding the least intercourse with them. They were induced to take these violent measures, from fear of the reforming spirit which had begun to manifest itself among the Christians of Mosul.

For several centuries, the Nestorians of Mesopotamia, Persia, and Assyria had maintained an independent and hostile attitude with regard to the pretensions of the See of Rome. The numerous papal emissaries who had endeavored, from time to time, to win over the discontented and the factious, two classes rarely absent from any community, to even a nominal submission to the papal supremacy, had most singularly failed in their attempts. Their arguments and their bribes proved alike ineffectual, till the disappointed vanity of a Nestorian prelate came to their aid, and effected a schism, the fruits of which became more manifest in succeeding years.

The same century which witnessed the Reformation, and the detachment of nearly the whole of Northern Europe from the pope's spiritual dominions, beheld a Nestorian bishop prostrate at the feet of Julius III. A spirited contest for the possession of the patriarchate of the East had arisen between Simeon Barmamas and John Sulaka. The character of the former has been differently described by friends and enemies. The one reveres him as the reformer of many abuses and superstitions which had crept into the Chaldean Church; while the latter represent him as an heretical and impious tyrant, whose sacrilegious hand was stretched forth to profane and abolish the pious customs of devout antiquity. He was probably one of those men who, with the best intentions, enter upon the work of reform with more zeal and precipitate haste than prudence, and avert, by their ill-judging violence, the co-operation of those who would otherwise be well disposed towards the objects which they have in view.

The wishes of the majority being in favor of Simeon, the

baffled Sulaka determined to strengthen himself by foreign alliances. He repaired to Rome, and, in the presence of the pontiff, abjured the errors of Nestorius, and received, as a reward, the title of Patriarch of the Chaldeans. In process of time, he formed a large party, distinguished by their submission to the Roman supremacy, and the self-assumed appellation of the Chaldean Church. After many dissensions and divisions, the Christians of Assyria arranged themselves at last into three bodies, two of whom obeyed the papal Patriarchs of Diarbekir and Mosul, while the hardy mountaineers of Tiyari and Ooromiah maintained obstinately their adherence to the tenets of Nestorius, and the authority of Mar Shimon. The heads of the Diarbekir and Mosul Romanists were distinguished by the names of Joseph and Elias, which descended, with the dignity, to the nephew and successor of each patriarch.

The changes in the services and ritual of the papal Chaldeans were slight and trifling. A few words of ambiguous import introduced into a liturgy composed in a dead language were little likely to awaken the suspicions or inflame the discontent of the multitude. But when, in after times, more manifest innovations were foisted into the old system, murmurs began to be heard, accompanied by some faint signs of opposition. The papal emissaries, however, went steadily on. Pictures crept into the churches, and the image-hating Nestorians beheld, with a mixture of horror and disgust, the elevation of a waxen idol in the sanctuary of God. The confession-boxes were also introduced, and it was even announced that a Latin liturgy was to be substituted for the old Chaldean missal. But the worst had yet to come.

A few years before my arrival, the Patriarch of Mosul died, and bequeathed his honors and his name to a nephew who had been educated under his own eye. The new patriarch was about to solicit the approbation and confirmation of the Roman pontiff, when it was announced at Mosul that the right of nomination had been transferred from the Chaldean clergy to the Supreme Head of the Church; and that he had appointed Mar Nicholas, a Persian bishop of doubtful character, to the patriarchate. This news excited general indignation. After a faint and feeble resistance, however, Mar Elia abdicated his rights, or at least quietly acquiesced in the usurpation of another; and the last descendant of a line

of patriarchs retired to a state of poverty and obscurity in one of the neighboring villages.

We found the Chaldeans of Mosul, therefore, divided into two parties, one of which recognized the pretensions of Mar Nicholas, the papal nominee, while the other, without absolutely rejecting him, retained a secret fidelity to the fallen house of Elia.

The latter party soon added to their private animosity towards the authority of Rome a hearty and determined dislike of the novelties which the papal party had introduced. They complained that new and unapproved rites, supported neither by Scripture nor tradition, had been forced upon them by the machinations of a foreign priesthood. The celebration of the mass in the chapel of the Italian missionaries was intended, they asserted, to prepare the way for its general adoption. The impediments laid in the way of the circulation of the Scriptures, they censured as policy of which even Mohammedans would be ashamed; while they pointed out, in coarse and bitter irony, the lamentable results of an enforced celibacy on the morals of the clerical body.

In countries where circumstances allow of the exercise of arbitrary power, the motto of the Church of Rome has always been "argue not, but strike." One Sunday morning, thirteen of the discontented were solemnly excommunicated, and a curse denounced against those who should converse or have any dealings with them.

One of these men was the leader of the rest, and was noted in the city for being among the most determined opponents of Rome. He was a short, square-built personage, with a burly face, more English than Chaldean. Though a little extreme in his views, like all reformers, his motives were single and pure. He desired to see his church freed from the hateful yoke of the stranger, and was ready to sacrifice anything to obtain so valuable an end. The rude eloquence of his tones, and the overwhelming ridicule which he poured unsparingly upon his shrinking and cowardly adversaries, might have been considered worthy of a more enlarged sphere of action. The papist party dreaded his approach, and fled from the sound of his voice as the Trojans retreated at the shout of Achilles. They endeavored to incense the pasha against him, but his bold daring had won the esteem of one *who was in some respects a kindred spirit*, and the governor

bade the accusers be gone, adding that Georgios was quite right in exposing the folly of a set of insane worshippers of images.

Some mollahs made our friend tempting offers if he would embrace the religion of the Prophet; but Georgios, while he disliked its corruptions, was sincerely attached to the Christian faith. He generally attended the daily service in our little chapel, and expressed himself much gratified with the purity and simplicity of the English ritual.

One day while on a visit to Kas Botros, an old Mohammedan came in, and, taking up a book of the Gospels which lay on the diwan, expressed himself much pleased with its contents. A conversation ensued, during which he informed us that he himself had been baptized in his infancy by a Christian priest.

"That is curious," remarked Kas Botros; "I certainly never heard of that practice before."

"It is often performed in Mosul," replied the old Moslem, "for most of us who live here are descended from Christian parents, who have become at various times professors of Islam. Not many years ago, I have heard old men say that a Christian pasha bare rule here, and Christians were above the Moslem in those days. On my head they were powerful then, and even a Mohammedan governor did not care to interfere with them. But since they quarreled among themselves, they have become weak as water."

"Is it common then in this city," I inquired, "for Mohammedan children to be baptized?"

"On my head it is," he answered; "I will tell you how it happened with me. I had not long left my mother's arms when I was taken very sick. My mother was distracted, for the physician gave me up, and said that Azrael was even then flapping his wings over my head. Then my mother slapped her face and tore her hair, and called to my sister to run for the mollah. He came, and gave her a verse of the Koran to hang about my neck in a little bag, for which he demanded five piastres, which my mother willingly paid, for she would gladly even have sold all her jewels to save my life. Still I grew worse and worse, and every one thought I was going to die, when an old Christian woman came in to visit my mother.

"'Ayesha,' said the new comer, 'Djanum my soul, do not

lament and grieve, but listen to what I am about to tell you. Your child's life may depend on it. Let me call our priest to baptize your son, and, by the mercy of the Holy Virgin, he shall recover.'

"'But what will the mollah say?' argued my mother.

"'The mollah is an ass, Djanum,' said the old woman; 'he told me once our sex should never see Paradise. Ah, Christianity is the religion for women. They say the Franks in the West even worship their females.'

"'Run, then, Rachel and fetch the priest,' said my mother; 'I am willing to try every means to save my child's life.'

"So old Kas Zachariah came and baptized me, and soon after, praise be to God, I recovered."

"Then do you attribute your recovery to your baptism?" asked I.

"Allah, the Exalted, knows," said the old Mohammedan, thoughtfully, as he arose to take his leave.



CHAPTER XVI.

Nestorian troubles and massacre. Flight of the patriarch. The Italian juggler. Death of Mohammed Pasha. The impostor. Nebbi Sheeth.

At the commencement of June, 1843, rumors of a strange and distressing character reached Mosul from the region of the Tiyari Nestorians. Various fugitives, who had barely escaped with their lives from the murderous attacks of the Kurds, reported that their once peaceful country was now a scene of desolating and savage warfare. From day to day, more disastrous tidings were arriving, till at length it was announced that the patriarch himself, with a considerable body of his clergy and flock, were upon their way to Mosul, intending to place themselves under the protection of the vice-consul of England, and to solicit through him the interposition of the British government with the Ottoman Porte. In order, however, to save the reader and myself much unnecessary trouble, I shall endeavor to trace from their commencement the causes which led to the Nestorian massacre. *I am the more* anxious to do this, in order to contradict the

false and calumnious statement which appeared in some English newspapers during the latter part of the year 1843.

The town of Jezirah has been already mentioned as situated on a small island formed by the Tigris, which, in that place, flows directly at the foot of the Kurdish Mountains. Inhabited almost exclusively by Kurds, it may indeed be considered as part of Kurdistan; and, though nominally under the Pasha of Erzeroum, the real government of it and part of the adjacent mountain territory has been confided to the charge of Kurdish chiefs, who claim the title of Beys of Jezirah.

At the period of my visit, the ruler of this insular town was Beder Khan, a man of some talent and more ambition. A kind of Oriental Cromwell in his way, he had obtained great influence and power by his known zeal for the tenets of the Koran, and unqualified abhorrence of Christians. Bigoted Kurds and fanatical mollahs fanned his prejudices, and flattered his ambition, with the prospect of erecting Kurdistan into an independent kingdom. The only obstacle to his wishes was the existence of a Christian power in the midst of the mountains, whose political interests rendered them likely to prove most inimical to his views.

The chosen ally and confederate of the Jezirah chief was the Emir of Hakkari, a district to the north-east of Mosul. This man, whose name was Noor Allah Bey, had gained an unenviable notoriety from his having connived at the murder of the European traveler Schulz. Dark, sullen, and ferocious, he was distinguished above all the Kurdish chiefs by his many acts of savage cruelty. He hated the Christians, and longed for nothing so much as an opportunity of showing his dislike by deeds.

Mohammed Pasha, of Mosul, was said to have become a party to a nefarious arrangement, whereby he engaged himself to allow the two Kurdish confederates to pursue their designs unmolested, provided he received a certain portion of the spoil. It is probable, also, that his brother of Erzeroum was not so ignorant of the intended plot as he found it afterwards necessary to pretend.

Having arranged their plan of operation, the two Kurdish chieftains discovered that a pretext for aggression was easily found. A slight quarrel between the Nestorians of one of the villages of Dez and some neighboring Kurds was made

use of as a pretence for beginning a bloody and exterminating war. Pleading the authority of an order from the Pasha of Erzeroum, Beder Khan Bey invaded the Nestorian territory at the head of a Kurdish force. Noor Allah Bey attacked them on the other side, and the Christians found that they were suddenly surrounded by foes.

Relying on the amity which had for some time subsisted between the patriarch and the Kurdish chiefs, they had taken no care to provide themselves with arms. At the commencement of the war they were massacred by hundreds without resistance; but the first panic of surprise having passed away, despair lent them courage and the means of defence. The peasant sharpened up the rusty sword which had so long lain neglected in the corner of his cottage, and prepared for more deadly warfare the long rifle which had hitherto been used only against the wild deer of the mountains. The husbandman, in lieu of more perfect implements of defence, converted his tools into weapons, and though distracted and divided among themselves by the arts of the Kurds, the Christians of the mountains determined to struggle manfully for their lives and liberties.

The conflict was desperate and sanguinary, for it was literally a war to the knife. The Kurds treated their captives with such barbarity, that the Christians perceived it was useless to count upon the mercy or magnanimity of their captors. They chose, in most instances, therefore, to die with arms in their hands, rather than be reserved for the tortures which the cruelty of the infidels delighted in inflicting.

In many captured villages, the ruthless barbarians tossed infants and children in fiendish sport on the points of their pikes, and reserved the youth of maturer age for ignominy worse than death. The groans of men expiring under the most dreadful tortures, and the shrieks and cries of insulted women, filled the whole region, while troops of helpless captives were driven like oxen down the steep paths of the Kurdish Mountains.

On one occasion, a fortress into which a body of armed Kurds had thrown themselves was besieged by the Nestorians. The former held out for some time, hoping for the arrival of succors from the main army of Beder Khan Bey. At length they became exceedingly distressed for want of water, and *promised upon the Koran* to capitulate if they were allowed

a plentiful supply from a well in the rear of the besiegers. The unsuspicious Christians granted them the permission desired, and even aided them in drawing the water. When the Kurds had satisfied their thirst, they retracted their solemn engagement and refused to deliver up the castle. The same day the expected succors arrived, a sharp contest ensued, in which the Christians were defeated, and many of them taken prisoners.

The Kurdish commander, incensed at the loss of men which he had sustained, ordered a large fire to be kindled in the square or market-place of the next village. His directions were obeyed, and, forcing his captives to sit round the blazing pile, he commanded his soldiers to force their legs into the flames, and thus gradually to burn the unfortunate men alive.

The struggle was carried on by both parties, at first with almost equal success, but it soon became evident that the Christians were the weaker, and must eventually succumb. Various circumstances contributed to their defeat. In the first place, the Maleks or chiefs of the Nestorians were divided among themselves, and jealous of the patriarchal power. In times of warfare too, an ecclesiastical government is rarely able to develop successfully those measures of resistance and opposition which are often necessary to the safety of the state. For many years, the spiritual chiefs of the Ti-yari had maintained their position more by the arts of policy than of war. The Maleks felt themselves without a leader or guide in the hour of battle, and many of them were disposed to undervalue a ruler whose marked deficiency in the arts which they themselves excelled in was becoming daily more apparent.

Had the patriarch been emulous of the actions performed by the warlike clergy of Europe in the Middle Ages, he might have exchanged his mitre for a helmet, and, unfurling the banner of the cross, called upon his people to charge the infidels boldly in the name of God and of St. George.* Had he possessed the sentiments of an ancient Puritan, he would have exhorted his vassals to smite the modern Moabites and Amalekites with the edge of the sword, in nearly the same

* St. George has long been the favorite saint of the Chaldeans, if one may judge from the numerous churches that bear his name.

language that was used by Joshua and Gideon.* But he had neither the talents nor the enthusiasm necessary to inflame the ardor of his subjects, although there is strong reason to believe that they would readily have responded to his exhortations.

Moreover, the temper of the Orientals is most averse to complicated and united movements, however well adapted for desultory and irregular warfare. The Nestorian who defended with dauntless bravery the safety of his hearth and the honor of his family would have been as reluctant as an ancient Highlander to abandon his local position for a main army, whose rendezvous was distant from his own abode. Unskilled in military manœuvres, he chose rather to rescue his humble dwelling from its assailants, or, if he failed, to redden the threshold of his fathers with his blood. When his village was burnt, and his wife and children slain or captives, he still maintained a species of guerilla warfare with his trusty rifle from crag to crag. When driven to his last retreat, he stood like the wolves of his native mountains boldly at bay, and left the marks of his expiring prowess on the bodies of his foes.

During the continuation of this contest, the Pasha of Mosul, who was well informed of all the events that had taken place in the mountains, affected the utmost astonishment at the movements of the Kurds. His pretended regret, however, was too palpable to deceive those who knew his character, and were well aware that a Turkish regiment, backed by a detachment of Albanians, with two or three field pieces, would have terminated the war at once.

The reverses of the Christians became more marked, and at length the patriarch was hunted from village to village with a small but faithful band of supporters, who refused to desert him in his distress. One of his last asylums was a small collection of huts on the banks of the Zab, where a visitation of a most painful character was destined to fall on his doomed head. A little higher up the river, the Kurds had succeeded in capturing the mother and one of the brothers of the patriarch. The age, sex, and rank of the former might have pleaded in her behalf, but such appeals were lost upon the savage barbarians, who, after offering shameful insults to their

* The Chaldee bears a strong similarity to the Hebrew.

defenceless captive, finally butchered her in the most savage manner, and cutting the corpse in four pieces, they sent the mutilated remains, secured to a small raft, floating down the Zab. Some Christians saw it as it passed the temporary refuge of the patriarch, they brought it to the shore, and the unfortunate and broken-hearted chieftain bent in mute agony over the dishonored form of her who had given him birth. His spirit was now overwhelmed with calamities, and he determined to strive no longer, but to seek in Mosul a refuge from his pursuers.

The knowledge that the patriarch had abandoned the Tiyari country was the signal for a vast tide of fugitives to descend to the plains. The villages on the site of Nineveh were filled with men, women, and children, covered with wounds, and suffering from the forced marches through the rocky defiles of Kurdistan. Numbers sank exhausted on the stony soil never to rise again; women clasped to their bosoms the cold and lifeless memorials of a husband slain in defending them from outrage. Sorrow and grief seemed the portion of the unhappy Nestorians, and the patriarch not unaptly availed himself of the mournful language of the prophet Jeremiah to express the extent of his own and his people's misfortunes.

One morning, as I was sitting with my friend B. in the court-yard of his house, it was announced that Mar Shimon had entered Mosul, and would shortly arrive at the English consulate. We immediately repaired thither, and in a few minutes the patriarch made his appearance. He possessed a tall, muscular figure, with more of the bearing of a soldier than of an ecclesiastic. His dress was strikingly dissimilar to the usual episcopal vestments of the East. A pair of long scarlet pantaloons and a short jacket seemed somewhat strange vestments for an Oriental catholicos. Such habiliments, however, might be necessary in the mountains, where long, flowing robes would have been attended with inconvenience, if not with danger.

The patriarch's manner was gentle and subdued. A marked melancholy sat on his features, and his hair, although his years did not exceed thirty, was prematurely gray. His archdeacon, Kas Auraha, or Abraham, and his two brothers, in deacon's orders, who had escaped the late massacre, accompanied him.

The patriarch and his principal attendants were accommo-

dated with rooms in the consulate, while I opened my house to the numerous fugitives, who came pouring in daily. They occupied chiefly the subterranean apartments, which were very spacious, and they always sought opportunities of viewing from the terraces the far distant hills of their mountain home.

My new guests were very orderly in their manners, though wild in their appearance. Only one decided quarrel broke out among them during their abode with me, and this was occasioned by a half-crazy old man who served the patriarch in the double capacity of a domestic and buffoon. This worthy was addicted, like many of his countrymen, to the vice of intoxication, and having on one occasion partaken rather freely of the juice of the grape, he grew riotous, and addressed a reproachful epithet to one of his companions. The fiery nature of the mountaineer was excited, and he retorted in no complimentary terms. The old buffoon drew his dagger and made a rush at his antagonist, who retreated into an inner apartment and shut the door. Nothing could equal the rage of old Yohannan at being thus balked of his vengeance. Two or three times he burst from those who were restraining him, and drove his knife into the hard wood of the door. At length he was quieted, and after sleeping off his drunkenness, appeared the next morning with a sober and abashed countenance.

Among the Nestorian fugitives was a woman named Martha, who had displayed, under trying circumstances, the courage of a heroine, and the hardihood of the sterner sex. Her story was interesting, and worthy of record. In one of the villages of the Tiyari, she had lived in peace for five years with her husband Daniel, a man of some standing among his fellow villagers. Two children had blessed their union, and in few cottages of the mountains could be found a happier or more affectionate pair. The Christian women of the Tiyari possess more freedom than their sisters of the plain, and are trained up in that hardy manner which enables them to face danger with almost the courage and resolution of a man.

One evening, Martha and Daniel were sitting in their cottage, and talking over the sad rumors which had lately reached the village. It was reported that war had broken out, that many Christians had been massacred, and that a

body of Kurds were in the neighborhood, who intended, in a few days, to make an attack upon them. A sorrowful foreboding seized the mind of Daniel as he took down his rifle and began to clean and arrange it for the approaching struggle. But he looked at his wife and his slumbering children, and he vowed inwardly to defend them to the last gasp.

With the active energy of a female mountaineer, Martha had been polishing and sharpening her husband's sabre, when a red glow was reflected through the small window of the cottage. Daniel opened the door and listened. His house was a few yards distant from the village, but he heard the shots and cries, and saw the flames arising from one or two of the more remote cottages. He hastily shut to the door, and barricaded it in the best way he was able.

A few minutes of fearful expectation had passed, during which Daniel girt on his sword, and loaded his rifle. Footsteps approached the door, and a rough voice demanded admittance in Kurdish.

"I cannot open to strangers," was the reply.

"Give us instant entrance, you Christian dog," shouted several voices outside, "or we will burn your house without delay."

The Nestorian returned no answer, and the assailants endeavored to force the door. It resisted their efforts for some time, and when it at last gave way to repeated blows, they found the entrance defended by one who was prepared to maintain his ground with the desperation of a husband and father. One shot from his rifle had struck down one of the Kurds, and he had handed it to Martha to reload while he endeavored to make good his position with his sabre. At this moment, a bullet pierced his heart, and he fell mortally wounded on his threshold. "The bear is dead," said the Kurdish leader; "spare not the cubs."

One of his followers fired his pistol at the eldest boy, and killed him on the spot. The wife had seen her husband fall, with a mute grief that almost paralyzed her exertions, and overwhelmed her with a species of helpless stupor; but the sight of her children's blood drove the mother almost frantic. The assassin paid the penalty of his brutal act with his life; and Martha, casting down the discharged rifle, which had avenged her son, caught up the sabre which had fallen from her husband's dying hand.

With the fury of a tigress robbed of her young, she snatched up her remaining child, and flew at the Kurds with all the earnestness of desperation. They found themselves unable to resist the fury of her attack, and four of them had fallen dead or wounded, when a small body of Christians arrived in time to rescue the heroic widow from the shame and insults of captivity.

But a sore trial still awaited her. The rescuers feared to remain for any time in the village, lest another attack should be made by a stronger force; and they determined to lose no time in seeking the shelter of the plains. With an embrace hastily bestowed on the lifeless clay of her loved ones, the widow took up the surviving child, and prepared to leave her former happy home. No tears betrayed her emotion, but the rude mountaineers who accompanied her remarked her deep silence, and the fixed gaze of her eye. The march was long and dreary, but she uttered no complaint. Many sank exhausted under their fatigues, but Martha seemed supported by an energy almost preternatural.

At length the exiles reached the town of Mosul, and their expressions of joy betrayed their satisfaction that they were now in safety. Martha alone maintained a cold and silent indifference. It was plain, although they knew it not, that her heart was broken.

The child was soon healed of its wounds, but misfortune seemed to follow it even in exile. A kind of pestilence broke out among the fugitives, and the heroic mother was one of the first victims. Stern, bearded men wept like children as they followed her to the grave, and the orphan child was regarded and tended with particular affection and care.

A month or two after the arrival of the patriarch, an Italian conjurer made a visit to Mosul. He was skillful in his trade, and was very desirous of exhibiting his talents before the European residents of the city. Mar Shimon had expressed some curiosity to behold these performances, and it was thought that a little amusement might be acceptable in his distressed state of mind.

A large saloon in B.'s house was cleared and prepared for the scene of action. At the upper end was a long table, behind which stood the juggler with his various apparatus. The Europeans and a large body of Nestorians, as many in *fact* as could crowd themselves into the room, were present.

The patriarch seemed at first amused at the facetious tricks which were exhibited. He even laughed heartily at the surprise of some of his flock, who found articles of their property had suddenly been multiplied or annihilated by the Frank enchanter. At length, however, the conjuror proceeded to exhibit the abstruser mysteries of his art. The patriarch's face became gradually more serious, and his features at last assumed an expression of deep alarm. He rose hastily from his seat, and whispered to B. "I can remain no longer, for surely the Evil One worketh through this man."

An English merchant, resident at Mosul, had been among the spectators, and by some chance had seated himself next to the patriarch. His good-humored countenance attracted the attention of the latter, who exchanged with him, during the evening, a mute pantomime of smiles and nods. At the conclusion of the performance, when the patriarch rose to retire, he presented his hand to this gentleman, expecting that, according to the custom of the East, he would respectfully press it to his lips. But the worthy Englishman, not understanding this mode of salutation, grasped with much vigor the proffered member, and after bestowing on it a hearty shake, said, in good earnest English, "I'm glad to make your acquaintance, Mar Shimon."

The representations of Sir Stratford Canning on behalf of the murdered Nestorians had roused the Ottoman government into something like a determination to look into the matter. Beder Khan Bey was no favorite at Stamboul, and the influence of Mohammed Pasha was on the wane. Various complaints of extortion against the latter had awakened the Porte to the fact that his coffers were too full, and might undergo a slight diminution with great profit to his majesty, the Sultan. It is never, however, the nature of Turks to be precipitate. After the usual course of *Inshallah* and *Bacalum*,* they agreed to send a young effendi of the Reformed school to investigate the affair. The English vice-consul at Samsoun was joined in commission, and the two gentlemen arrived at Mosul in due time.

While they were on the road, tidings of the proposed commission of inquiry had reached the watchful ears of Mohammed

* If it please God, and we shall see; two phrases very common in Turkish mouths, especially when they desire to promote delay.

Pasha. He had taken very much of late to habits of intoxication; for, like most of his class, he felt and expressed a great contempt for the mollahs and their doctrines. One morning it was announced that the pasha was ailing, news which filled all Mosul with secret joy. In the evening, he was worse, and Dr. Grant, of the American mission, was requested to hold a consultation with the Armenian physician of the pasha. But their efforts were useless, and the remorseful tyrant expired soon afterwards, loudly lamenting in his last moments the injuries which he had done to Mar Shimon.

His death was a signal for a general rejoicing, since all classes felt that they could well spare him. The day of his burial was held as a fête, and numbers appeared abroad, clad in their best apparel, and making holiday with their wives and children. Small booths were erected on the banks of the river, and in that part of the city called the quarter of the Tahara, which was covered with gardens and ruins. Had some signal and unexpected good fortune happened to each of the population of Mosul, they could hardly have rejoiced more. It was even feared that they might attempt a riot in the exuberance of their joy. People in the East are so little accustomed to freedom, that even the semblance of it produces a species of moral intoxication.

The mollahs of Mosul had never been great favorites with the late ruler. He had abridged their privileges, and made free, on several occasions, with their cash. Moreover, he was decidedly opposed to the pious frauds which they sometimes played off upon the people in the name of the Prophet.

One day, a pretender to sanctity was detected in a manifest fraud. This fanatic had inveigled himself into the confidence and esteem of an old merchant of Mosul, who was very credulous and very rich. The impostor had promised to obtain for him a vision of houries and the secret of making gold, two things which the old man coveted extremely. His delusion became so great that he received the dervish into his house and treated him as a son. The fears of his family were even excited that he might make him his heir; a proceeding not at all to their taste. They carried their complaint to the pasha, who summoned the impostor and his dupe before him.

"Is it true, O Father of Stupidity," said the governor, *addressing* the old merchant, "that you have been promised

visions by this fellow, and that he has instructed you in the art of making gold?"

"It is true, O pasha," was the reply; "and I fully believe his words."

"Baccalum, we shall see!" observed the pasha. "Bring the necessary things for inflicting the bastinado."

His orders were obeyed, and four stout kawasses entered, bearing each a formidable whip of cowhide. The dervish eyed these preparations with a rueful look, while the pasha addressed him in the following words:—

"Unclean fellow that you are, you are imposing upon this man's ignorance and folly, to serve certain purposes of your own. You have asserted that it is in your power to make gold. I, therefore, command you to transmute this piece of money (throwing down a piastre) into the precious metal, on pain of fifty sticks."

The impostor had no lack of impudence, and he perceived that nothing but an extraordinary effort could save him from the punishment which his roguery had so well deserved. Assuming an injured air, he complained that the pasha should treat a holy devotee in that rude and peremptory manner. "The secrets of heaven," he concluded, "are only for those who seek them with humility and fasting. I am not at liberty, O pasha, to discover to you any of these mysteries, unless you will submit to the necessary initiatory process."

"Peki, very well," said his excellency; "I believe you will soon change your tone. Kawasses, down with this fellow, and beat him soundly till he confesses his villainy."

"I hear and obey," was the reply, as they placed the impostor on his back, and began to belabor his feet with their formidable whips. But he was not proof against the pain, and, after a few blows, he expressed his willingness to confess. Having acknowledged his imposture, the pasha set him at liberty, with a grave caution never to offend again.

The mollahs, however, were little disposed to admit the justice of a procedure which exposed the knavish doings of their class. They had also another cause of complaint against the deceased pasha, which, they persuaded the people, had brought down upon him the vengeance of Heaven. Among the Mohammedan places of worship in Mosul, was a mosque dedicated to Nebbi Sheeth, or the Prophet Seth,

which had been founded and endowed by one of the former pashas. According to the tenor of the endowment, each successive governor was bound to be present at an annual sermon preached in this place, and to present the mollahs attached to it with dresses of honor afterwards.

Like his predecessors, Mohammed Pasha was, of course, subject to this rule. The sermon he had no objection to, but the price of the dresses was a serious consideration. At length, he purchased some tarnished finery of the Jews, who, in the East, as well as in the West, exercise their national calling of vendors of old clothes.

At the time appointed, the robes were presented, but the mollahs were grievously offended to find them only second-hand vestments. They remonstrated, but his excellency declared he would bestow no other apparel; and an altercation ensued, in the course of which the pasha cursed the mollahs and their patron, Nebbi Sheeth. Six weeks after, he died, and the devout Mohammedans in Mosul believed that he had fallen a victim to the vengeance of the insulted Prophet.

Immediately after the pasha's death, seals were put upon his treasure chests, which were shortly after formally appropriated by the Turkish government. His family received orders to repair to Constantinople, and were granted a small pension wherewith to support themselves.

Mohammed Pasha was a man of very low extraction, and could neither read nor write. Like his cotemporary, the Viceroy of Egypt, he had been originally a common soldier. Avarice rendered his administration intolerable to all parties; but, though he scrupled at nothing to obtain his ends, he was not naturally cruel; nor, like many others, did he inflict punishment for the bare luxury of enjoying human suffering. His bold and determined character, and the vigorous measures he employed, tended very much to restrain the ravages and depredations of the Kurds.

He left three wives to lament his loss, or to rejoice at their freedom. The eldest of these was a Greek, who had been united to him in the days of poverty, and it was said that he loved her better than any other human being. To her wise counsels and guidance he considered that he owed his good fortune, and to his credit she always received from him the kindest and most respectful treatment. The other two were

young Georgians, who enjoyed little consideration from a man who had outlived the attractions of lust.

The town of Mosul is divided into several quarters, the inhabitants of which have a species of hereditary feud with each other. After the pasha's death, several quarrels took place between them, which frequently made parts of the city scenes of riot and confusion. When the emotions of joy at their late release were somewhat abated, not a few of the most wealthy and respectable citizens sighed for the arrival of another governor, and confessed concerning the late one, almost in the words of Shakspeare, their conviction that "they could have better spared a better man."

CHAPTER XVII.

The Eastern Christians. Their opinions. Clergy. General character.

THE majority of travelers in the East have found themselves constrained to devote a few pages to notices of the present state and tenets of that numerous and influential body, the Oriental Christians. Missionary journals have been published to acquaint the public with the differences that prevail among them, to censure their ignorance, or to condemn their superstitions; but neither the traveler nor the missionary seems to have succeeded in exciting the great mass of English readers to feel either interest or curiosity respecting their brethren in the East.

Yet the fault seems to lie not so much in the nature of the subject as in the manner in which it has been generally brought forward. The traveler confines himself to sketches of individuals, while the missionary deals with systems, and neither represents to us, in one single and concentrated view, the workings and developments of the latter, as exemplified by the habits, manners, and belief of the former. But, that I may not seem to censure in others what I have myself been afraid of attempting, I shall endeavor as briefly as possible to give a connected, and, I trust, impartial survey of the state of the Christians in the Turkish dominions.

The great body of readers are by no means well informed

respecting the various religious creeds of the East. I have heard it gravely stated by persons of education that the inhabitants of the Turkish dominions professed exclusively the Mohammedan faith. Few have fully received and comprehended my assertion, that there were Christians in the East, and even when this fact has been admitted as possible, it was supposed that they were foreign residents, and not the natives of the soil. To such persons, therefore, the information that nearly half the population of Asiatic Turkey profess the Christian faith, may seem novel and startling.

Nor do those among us who lay claim to more extensive knowledge of the subject appear to have entertained any clear or decided views of Eastern Christendom. By some the latter is made to consist only of the members of the Greek or Malekite Church, who continue, in Syria and Asia Minor, to maintain the supremacy of the Patriarch of Constantinople, with the ritual and customs of that see. Others imagine the Christians of these regions to be a species of Papists, while a third class have little more than a mere vague, undefined suspicion, that they are a degraded, superstitious race, few in numbers, and contemptible in influence, possessing little to excite either interest or inquiry.

Yet there can be little doubt but that in the Oriental Christians, we behold the descendants of the great Asiatic nations of antiquity. The Malekite and the Syrian represent the Syro-Macedonian race, which, under the rule of Alexander's successors, acquired to themselves the empire of the East. The Chaldean and the Nestorian are the only surviving human memorial of Assyria and Babylon; while in the features of the Persian Christian, we trace the lineaments of the ancient Magian physiognomy. The Mohammedan religion is but a comparatively modern superstition, and its professors, for the most part in the East, are the descendants of the Arab invaders, or the posterity of the barbarians of the Caucasus. The same feeling, therefore, that teaches us to view with respect the relics of antiquity, and the tokens of civilization, whose sway has long been annihilated, may induce us to contemplate with interest the descendants of the mighty of our race.

Those who have studied with care the sculptured representations of the ancient Assyrians, and compared them with *the modern inhabitants of the plains of Nineveh*, can hardly

fail to trace the strong features of affinity which exist between the robed monarchs and priests of early days, and the Christian peasants of Bagh Sheikha and Bagh Zani.

Nor should it be forgotten that, while change after change, and innovation after innovation, has altered repeatedly the aspect of the religious systems of Europe, the East has remained immovably steadfast to her ancient traditions, and presents to the unprejudiced and philosophic inquirer the unmistakable outlines of Christianity in the third century. It is true, indeed, that the inward spirit has nearly deserted the outward shrine, and too often the actual existing state of our faith in the regions of the East bears the same resemblance to the eprimitive church that the motionless corpse does to the acting and thinking man. Yet even the sight of the dull, cold, and lifeless clay conveys a faithful idea of the living being as he moved and spoke, before the eyes were closed, and the soul had winged its flight.

The corruptions of Oriental Christianity have been chiefly internal, altering and changing little in its outward appearance, while in the West a cotemporary of Basil or Cyprian would be chiefly struck by the external difference which the institutions of European piety present to the religious usages of his own day. The Romanist and the Protestant of modern times would be equally at a loss to discover in the outward features of Oriental religion the type of his individual creed. The former might point with triumph to the opinions entertained respecting the sacrificial character of the eucharist, to the veneration for tradition and the priestly office, to confession, invocation of saints, and many ritual observances, which bear a strong resemblance to his own system. The Protestant, on his side, might urge the non-reception of the theory of transubstantiation, the unlimited use of the Scriptures by the laity, the marriage of ecclesiastics, the practice of receiving the communion in both kinds, and last, though not least, the rejection of the pope's supremacy. An impartial observer, whether his own views were papal or Anglican, could hardly fail to admit that, with some peculiar errors omitted, the external fabric of Eastern Christianity bore no slight resemblance to the portrait drawn of the Church in early ages. Such an one, also, might find the explanation of this unchangeableness in the well known Oriental hatred of variation, in their adherence to even the forms of expression used

in Scriptural times,* and in the tenacity with which they have resisted every known attempt at innovation. Not all the power, the bribes, or the sophistry of Rome, have been able to procure submission to permanent alterations; and the wiser and more prudent pontiffs have generally preferred contenting themselves with an empty act of homage, to hazarding the risk of enforcing a more marked uniformity between East and West. The Chaldeans or Syrians who have acknowledged the authority of the Pope still retain their former service, manners, and customs; their ecclesiastics marry as before, the vernacular translations of the Scriptures are widely circulated and thankfully perused, and a church that professes to be infallible has proved herself guilty of manifest inconsistency by sanctioning with approval in one place what she has been most forward to condemn in another.

The first impression that the inquirer into the state of Eastern Christendom would probably entertain, when he came to reflect on the objects of his survey, would be that the services, rites, and liturgies of the Orientals were, in their construction, the models of a pure Hebrew type. The form of their edifices, and the aspect, dress, and general appearance of their priests, would almost recall the days of the Temple worship; and the stranger who inhaled the odors of the incense, listened to the Chaldean or Syriac tones, and marked the sacrificial bearings of the whole service, might almost imagine himself an assistant at one of the symbolical oblations of the Levitical law. As his inquiries penetrated still deeper, he would meet with stronger traits of resemblance. The threefold divisions of the churches corresponding to a similar arrangement in the ancient Tabernacle and Temple, the deep mysterious aspect of the Sanctuary, walled in from ordinary view, and seen only through three narrow openings, before which at the time of consecration a veil is frequently suspended, would all tend to call to mind the ceremonial of the Old Testament. The constant use in the liturgies of the term sacrifice, and its application in various ways to the holy eucharist, gives a striking example of the sacrificial system of the East.

Like Clement, of Rome, in the first century, the Oriental

* "As the Lord liveth," and "as thy soul liveth," is a common expression among the Tiyari Nestorians, used, not as a quotation, but as an affirmation.

Christians view the three orders of the church as the successive continuation of the Jewish hierarchy, and in all their theological works the analogy is carefully inculcated. The Syriac, Arabic, and Chaldean terms for the Christian altar are all derived from the same root as the Hebrew word used in the Old Testament, and it is observable that, except among the Greeks, the appellation of "the Holy Table" is utterly unknown. The vestments, the incense, and the lights of the altar have been copied by Western churches, yet they have generally contrived to change their form or to alter their symbolical import. They have added to, or diminished from, the original patterns, while the East has observed them with scrupulous and minute fidelity.

Still more observable, perhaps, has been the marked opposition offered by the Orientals to the image worship of the West. Interpreting, literally, the prohibition of the second commandment, they have considered the making and adoration of statues as equally erroneous. Until a comparatively late period, the use of any painted or graven resemblance, even of a father or of a dear friend, although totally unconnected with the idea of worship, would have been utterly proscribed. The scrupulous Oriental, when he received the gift of a crucifix from some Italian missionary, rudely tore off the figure of the Saviour, and flung it from him with contempt and abhorrence, while he respectfully pressed the cross to his lips, and deposited it carefully in the bosom of his gown. The Gentile element has, since the promulgation of Christianity, been operating more or less in the West, while the Hebrew spirit, a spirit averse to the pictured resemblance of any divine or celestial being, has governed and influenced the spiritual children of the Apostles of the East.

The Eastern Christians have preserved among themselves the only remaining vestige of an hereditary priesthood. The Chaldean and Nestorian patriarchs have not of late been elected to their high and important office by the suffrages either of clergy or people. From very early times, the unmarried uncle transmitted to a favorite nephew the name and authority attached to the patriarchal rank. For some years, the appellation of Joseph designated the head of the church of Amida, an Elias ruled the clergy of the Patriarchate of Mosul, while a Shimon or Simon presided over the rude Nestorians of the mountains. This custom, so

peculiarly Hebrew, had gained the affections of the people to such an extent, that its abolition a short time back by papal authority, nearly drove the Chaldeans into rebellion.

The Orientals possess, in addition to their patriarchs, the three orders to be found in the English Church. But the Eastern bishop differs as widely from the Anglican prelate in his temporal circumstances as in external appearance. A venerable beard flows over a long vest of purple, covered by a gown of dark cloth. His shaven head is concealed by a black turban, twisted in a peculiar fashion, and a dark-colored shawl encircles his waist. An attendant deacon precedes his steps, bearing a silver-tipped staff.

The income of an episcopal dignitary would be considered magnificent if it exceeded one hundred pounds per annum. Few receive more than an annual stipend of eighty pounds, and some can scarcely be said to have any revenue at all; their necessary expenses being furnished from the rents of lands of the monastery where they reside. The priest's income is of course much less than that of his superior, and would be thought fairly represented by the average rate of twenty pounds per annum. The deacons rarely receive anything, as they are generally merchants and men of business, from whom the canons of the East do not require the surrender of their worldly calling, unless they wish to advance to the higher grade of the priesthood.

The monks are supported, as in Europe, by the revenues attached to each monastery, which afford an ample supply for their slender wants. By the rules of the Eastern churches, most of the laity would be restricted from the use of animal food during nearly a third portion of the year; but the abstinence of the monks is, of course, more rigorous and severe. Their garb is not so varied or distinctive as that of monastic habits of Europe. A long dark vest, resembling the common zeboon of the country, with, perhaps, a jacket of black cloth, is the usual attire of an Eastern monk. They are a pale, mild, and gentle race, often ignorant and not very liberal in their views; but, during the frequent intercourse I have held with them, I never knew one who was a hypocrite, or a secret debauchee, two characters which have been supposed by some inseparable from the system of monachism. I have seen these men eat, thankfully, food which the lowest of English laborers would not touch. I have heard them

engaged in praising God at an hour when English rectors and curates have been quietly sleeping, or returning from some pleasant social party, and I have watched them delving and digging in their little plantations till the perspiration poured from them in streams. Such is the idle, lazy, and luxurious life of the monks of the East.

The poverty of the clergy may, at first sight, seem to infer their abasement and degradation, but the respect in which their persons are held fully compensates for any inconvenience which they might suffer, were they the inhabitants of more civilized countries. The stout and prosperous merchant, the rich shopkeeper, or the stalwart squire, who condescend to pity and to patronize the threadbare curate or the small and ill-paid vicar, will be astonished to hear that, at the approach of some ragged priest or bishop, a wealthy and well-dressed assembly will rise with respect and reverence to press his hand to their lips, and to seat him in the most comfortable corner of the diwan. Money and a home are little wanted where hospitality is a national virtue, and it is a priest that seeks for it in the name of the God whom he serves.

Nor are the clergy less beloved on account of their general familiarity and condescension to even the meanest members of their flock. I have frequently witnessed the small room of a bishop crowded from morning till night with the poor, the distressed, and the unfortunate, each seeking from his spiritual pastor advice, assistance, and consolation. The slender purse of a self-denying prelate often furnishes many with the means of life, and those who lack the direction of a man elevated above the passions and prejudices of the world may find it freely bestowed by one who is, in every respect, the father of his people.

The Christians of the East are in some measure subject to their clergy in civil as well as in spiritual matters. The patriarch of each community is responsible for the Kharadj or poll-tax paid by each individual Christian. He even possesses the power of inflicting imprisonment or stripes in certain cases, and it is frequently extremely difficult for an Oriental Christian to quit his own community, and transfer his obedience to another church.

The appointments to episcopal rank are generally placed in the hands of the patriarch of each church, who is, in turn, either elected by the bishops, or succeeds to his office by

hereditary right. But the chiefs of the Christians who reside at Constantinople are frequently liable to deposition. They are usually the creatures of some rich and wealthy laymen, who oblige the bishops to acquiesce in their choice. Among the Armenians, an association of wealthy bankers generally nominate the patriarch, while the head of the Greek Constantinopolitan Church is more commonly chosen by the princes or archons of the Fanar. Political motives may urge the Porte to depose a patriarch, and to exile him to the seclusion of some distant monastery. Nor are any of the great spiritual chiefs exempt from so painful a degradation. But these measures are seldom taken, except against the patriarchs resident at Constantinople; and even then they more frequently result from the cabals of the Christians and of foreign powers than from any direct hostility to the individual on the part of the Turks.

By an edict, which dates from the period of the Mohammedan conquest, it has been forbidden to the Christians to erect new churches, although those at present in existence may lawfully be repaired. It has not, however, been found utterly impossible to elude this law, by obtaining a special firman from the Sultan, authorizing the erection of new edifices. In some cases, where the members of a Christian community have joined another church, as was the case with the Syrians, who submitted themselves to the authority of the Roman See, the sacred building has been divided by a central partition and a separate end allotted to each of the contending parties. The Jacobite Syrians, however, made a vigorous attempt to recover possession of the whole of their divided edifices, alleging, with some appearance of plausibility, that they were originally the property of the sect, and could not be alienated from them.

The force of circumstances and the character of their Mohammedan rulers have introduced many restraints into the domestic regulations of the Oriental Christians. Their females appear abroad veiled in the same manner as those of the Mohammedans, and, according to an old Hebrew custom, they are obliged to confine themselves during the service at church to a latticed gallery, which is frequently too distant from the altar to allow of their seeing or hearing with comfort. I have been told, though I trust it is an unfounded *calumny*, that they frequently beguile the tedium occasioned

by a worship conducted in an unknown language, with lively discussions and local gossip on the appearance of the males, and on the domestic concerns of their family circles. Few of them are able to read, but the prejudice at first entertained against female education is gradually decreasing, and we may hope soon that a new and more intellectual generation will atone for the deficiencies of their mothers and grandmothers.

Many of the Christians have imbibed the manners of their Turkish masters, and treat their wives with little consideration or respect. Yet, upon the whole, the Christian women have more liberty than their Mohammedan sisters, and are not slaves to the caprices of an angry despot. They are not liable to have their affections slighted, and their tranquillity destroyed, by the introduction of a second wife or a favorite concubine into their homes; nor can the marriage tie be annulled with the same facility as among the Mohammedans. Of late years, also, the prevalence of a better and more enlightened spirit has secured for Christian wives and daughters a greater amount of affection and kindness from those whom the religion of the Gospel enjoins to render both.

Few people have met with more undeserved reproaches from various Frank travelers than those Orientals who profess our faith. Looked upon as a degraded class, their acquaintance is little sought for by those who desire to make a figure in the eyes of the rulers of the land. The privacy of the unfortunate Christian is intruded upon, his best rooms given up, and his finest pipes and choicest provisions deemed only the just meed of the traveler, who, at the same time, despises and annoys him. If he murmur, the intelligent Frank notes his remarks in his book, as an instance of the ingratitude of Christians; if he civilly submits to be put out of the way, his good humor is ascribed to servility. The intoxication of one individual and the falsehood of another are made the characteristics of a whole body; and the wandering son of Japhet convinces himself, and would fain convince his readers, that the Christians of the East are the worst of created beings.

Yet even if they were as evil and worthless as the unsympathizing strangers depict them, no slight share of the blame may rest upon their brethren in Europe. For the last few years Turkey has been inundated with the scum of Italy and France, with adventurers whose vices and defects have called

forth derision and contempt from Mohammedans themselves. It is a fact well ascertained by persons resident in the different maritime towns, that the increase of European settlers has kept equal pace with the increase of immorality and vice.

Yet in places where he is free from the contamination of Frank associates, the character of the native Christian can bear the test of a searching and impartial examination. He is neither a hero nor a saint, though within the compass of twenty years from the present time the Moslem sword has been red with the blood of martyrs. Oppression has made him servile, and ignorance superstitious, but in morality he need not shrink from a comparison with the European professors of his faith. Rarely will a profane expletive or the irreverent use of the Divine name be heard from one who understands in its literal import the precept "Swear not at all."

The Eastern Christian is generally a tender father and a faithful husband; he reverences his clergy, but reads for himself the Sacred Records. Unlike the inhabitants of some civilized nations, he does not conceive that orthodoxy resides more in a black garment than a white one; and he can abominate idols and idolatry without being thrown into convulsions at the sight of a cross. The perusal of the Divine Word has neither made him a fanatic nor an opposer of the laws; and if it has produced in him sentiments of toleration, which some may deem too widely extended, it is a fault that most candid observers will deem venial.

At a time when Jews and pagans draw so largely on our national sympathies, it can scarcely be expected that a mere Christian should gain much attention. The calamities of the Nestorians and their patriarch have not even drawn a lament from those whose tender feelings were outraged by attacks on the interesting savages of the China seas. The murder of several hundreds of peaceful husbandmen, holding a form of Christianity which few Protestants would consider objectionable, has excited less interest than the story of a fugitive negro who should invoke the genius of insulted freedom from the platform of Exeter Hall. Yet the Christian of the East has not been entirely passed over either by Europeans or Americans. The former have filled his country with bishops in partibus, and missionary monks, *while the latter have also transplanted to the far East the*

system of the Puritans, and the dogmas of Geneva. The motives of both are perhaps equally disinterested and sincere; yet they will probably end in the annihilation of Oriental Christianity as a system.

The American missionaries have generally proved themselves men whom every one must respect for their sincerity and piety; but it seems clear that their system, if successful, would be the downfall of the Oriental churches. Divided into small sections, animated by a zeal more fiery and unaccommodating than that which warms the colder bosoms of the North, the prevalence of the Presbyterian system would be the signal for universal confusion and party strife. The warm and ardent temperament of the Asiatic would not rest content with words, and an appeal to more potent weapons could have no other effect than to bring disgrace upon the Christian name.

But the Calvinistic creed is too intellectual to adapt or to recommend itself to an Oriental mind. That warm and imaginative nature requires symbolism as the guide to religious truth. It adores not emblems, it only uses them: but still it cannot dispense with the assistance which they convey.

Yet there is one system which professes symbolism in common with the Oriental, and desires to subdue all other forms of Christianity to herself. The Church of Rome, that wonderful and gigantic power whose footsteps are everywhere, is gaining daily fresh strength in the East. Active, restless, and bold, her emissaries move from city to city with the celerity and order of trained soldiers. They tolerate what they have at present no strength to change, and extend at once the political power of France, and their own authority. Possessed of a system at the same time flexible and firm, they can in one breath proclaim their unchangeableness, and assimilate themselves to the prejudices of the East.

Russia protects the Greek, and France the Roman Catholic Christians, while the Protestant powers of Europe are to both objects of suspicion and dislike. Yet in the event of the downfall of Turkey, a consummation which cannot long be delayed, the Christians cannot be overlooked or disregarded. Nearly all the commerce, trade, and money of the Ottoman empire is in their hands. The Nestorians and the Maronites have shown themselves equal to the fatigues of warfare and the dangers of active strife. The power of the

Christians, therefore, is not to be despised, particularly if united by the creed of Rome into one body, and supported either by France or Russia.

The time may come when English politicians will regret their short-sightedness, in neglecting to create a friendly interest in the midst of an empire whose present dynasty must soon surrender to its ancient possessors their ill-used and usurped dominion. When the Russian eagle waves from the towers of Constantinople, and the French standard floats over the dome of Omar, the rulers of England may feel bootless and unavailing sorrow that they have treated with contempt and indifference the important claims of the Christians of the East.*

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Osmanli. Influence of Mohammedanism. Turkish civilization. State of the law. Difference of the races inhabiting Turkey. General remarks.

ONE thousand years have nearly elapsed since a horde of wandering Sarmatians issued from the plains of Tartary, and formed settlements to the north of Bokhara, in a region which still retains the appellation of Turkistan. A few scattered and wandering tribes maintain to the present day the name of Turcoman, and the nomadic habits of their progenitors. With their dark-colored tents, and their numerous flocks, they roam through the fairest portions of Western Asia, and preserve intact, in their habits and usages, the simplicity of pastoral life. But, at the commencement of the eleventh century, the majority of the Turcomans had quitted the mild and peaceful pursuits of their fathers, for the more brilliant attractions of mercenary warfare. Under the banners of the house of Abbas, they had rendered valuable service in the Persian war, and the grateful caliphs assigned their faithful tributaries some of the fairest portions of the conquered soil.

The new colony was no sooner settled in their foreign

* Under this title I have referred principally to the Chaldean and Syrian Christians, as the Greeks may be considered as Europeans, or at least the *observers of a European form of Christianity.*

abode than they embraced with ready complacency the creed of their Arab masters. Their previous religious notions resembled the confused and unintelligible superstitions of those rude and barbarous tribes who inhabit the wilds of Asiatic Russia. They professed a belief in one Supreme Being, but they offered him neither homage nor prayers. In the times of calamity or distress, they relied on the intercession of certain priests or enchanters, who undertook, for a specific sum, to remove the misfortunes or the diseases of their votaries. The Tartar races have generally been noted for their indifference to particular forms of religious truth, and the Mohammedan mollahs, who set forth the doctrines of Islam, in the name of the Prophet's vicar, found probably little reason to complain of their new disciples.

The Persian settlement soon attracted fresh bodies of the Turcomans, who abandoned their wild and wandering mode of life, and barbarous superstitions, for the benefits of semi-civilization, and the system of Mohammed. Thus reinforced, the original settlers became strong enough to dispute the empire of Asia with their former sovereigns, and, in A. D. 1055, Togrul Bey, of the Turcoman family of Salguez, made himself master of Baghdad; while other chiefs of his nation carried their conquests into Asia Minor and India.

In A. D. 1065, the lieutenants of the Turkish Prince Gelaeddin drove the Saracens from Syria, and possessed themselves of the Holy City, where they committed the most fearful atrocities, and aroused against the professors of the Mohammedan faith the indignation of Christian Europe. The Crusades followed, and for a time we lose sight of the Turcomans, whose savage prowess was eclipsed by the conquests of Saladdin. A few centuries later, we behold them the lords of Asia Minor, and the masters of Constantinople.

From the period of the subversion of the Greek Empire, the power of the Turks began gradually to decline. Foiled in their attempts against Europe, the Ottoman Sultans were soon obliged to confine themselves to the boundaries of their conquered dominions. Yet even here they possessed a scope wide enough to gratify the most insatiable ambition. The fertile regions of Greece and Asia Minor were theirs, and the fruitful plains of Assyria and Mesopotamia yielded to their lieutenants a produce which, in earlier days, had been the support of two mighty empires. The islands of Rhodes and

Cyprus obeyed their authority, while Egypt and the coast of Africa paid them at least a nominal obedience. Wise and politic measures, introduced by a sagacious and far-sighted government, might have rendered Turkey the first empire in the world.

But the great princes of the Ottoman race were mere conquerors, who had no talent for legislation. They abandoned their tributaries to the tyranny of pashas, who used their unlimited authority for the purpose of amassing wealth. The Porte, indeed, exercised a species of retributive justice, which, however, tended to increase the evil it was designed to remedy. The plundered and desolated province found that its tyrant was removed, and his wealth confiscated; but his ill-gotten gains were not made use of to repair the wrongs which he had inflicted. The whole property of the deposed or strangled pasha went to swell the treasury of his sovereign, while, in many instances, the sacrifice of a large sum procured for a politic offender both indemnity and impunity. Some of the governors of provinces acquired influence enough to defy the authority of the Sultan; and the dangerous alternative of private assassination was substituted for a legal trial and execution.

Yet the greatest hinderance to civilization was probably to be sought for in the unchanging character of the Mohammedan system. That system was not merely a series of doctrines purely theological, which formed a state creed, but it was the political and civil code of the country. The crude notions and shadowy theories of the obscure merchant of Mecca were made the standard by which all measures were to be tested. As long as they adhered faithfully to such a system, the Sultans of Turkey were bound to be constantly at war with their Christian neighbors, and to impose upon all conquered states the alternative of the Koran, or the sword. They could scarcely tolerate, much less reward, the ingenuity or ability of their Christian subjects. They dared hardly, indeed, protect the latter from pillage and injustice, since the doctors of their law had declared that, in a suit between a Christian and a Mohammedan, the oath of the former was not valid.

Moreover, the system of the Koran waged war against art of every description, and considered science, with its experiments, as another name for magic. The superstitious dread

of an ignorant populace was easily excited, and the unfortunate innovator might atone for his ingenuity with his life. The aid of Europeans was, for a time, rejected with disdain, and thus, while Europe was advancing in civilization, Turkey retained, at the commencement of the nineteenth century, the habits and institutions of the thirteenth. Yet, with all this apparent and external fidelity to the precepts of the Arabian lawgiver, a great and vital change was slowly operating internally.

The first ancestors of the Turcomans who embraced the creed of Islam received probably the teaching of its mollahs with a mingled feeling of curiosity and indifference. But their descendants imbibed with more devotion and zeal the dogmas of a system which was at once attractive to sensuality, and fostered the love of enterprise. The Turkish warrior, aided, as he imagined, by supernatural power, fought with redoubled fury against those whom he considered the enemies of God. If he vanquished, and remained alive to enjoy the fruits of his victory, the persons of his captives were at his disposal, and their ransom or their sale in the slave-market of Constantinople produced an addition to the ordinary booty of a victor.

He believed himself to be performing not merely a political, but a religious duty, when he charged the squadrons of the Christians, and anticipated, besides the rewards of successful warfare, an increase of felicity in the paradise of Allah! If he fell in conflict with the enemies of Islam, his instructors had taught him to expect the celestial glories of martyrdom, and the embraces of the houries in the ever verdant gardens of the blessed on high. Nor was he at liberty to avoid or to arrest the stroke of destiny. His cowardice, or unwillingness to meet danger, would make little difference as to his final fate. All the actions of his life had been decreed before his birth, and the hand of Allah could secure him uninjured, when surrounded by foes; or terminate his career in the midst of apparent safety and tranquillity.

The courage of the Moslem, therefore, was a necessary deduction from his creed, but it ceased to animate him when his faith in that creed was shaken or impaired. The adherence of Islam ceased to conquer when he ceased to believe.

Moreover, the system of Mohammed is one that does not depend, like Christianity, on its own inherent truth for sup-

port. The doctrines of the Prophet of Mecca are the notions of a fanatical and successful warrior. They allure in the excitement of conflict, or in the bustle of a campaign, but they are not suited for a season of peace and tranquillity. The glories of Islam are only to be sustained at the point of the sword, and the votary who pauses for a moment in his intoxicating career of victory, to examine critically the articles of his faith, will soon find that the result will be skepticism or indifference.

Nor must it be forgotten that a system like Mohammedanism can only be sustained by constant and unremitting success. The moment reverses are encountered, the Moslem combatant must question, in some degree, the correctness of the supposition that he is the exclusive favorite of Heaven. The fanatical peasant of the interior still believes that his great Sultan is paramount over all nations, and that the kings of Europe are his tributaries. Deprive him of this belief, convince him of the superiority of the Franks, and the charm is broken, the illusion destroyed. He slowly awakes to the reality that his creed is not necessarily the same victorious and Heaven-sent system which it has hitherto been represented, and the tenet of predestination inculcated by it induces, in the place of desperate and superhuman courage, a sullen and helpless submission to what is considered the will of Allah.

The European reverses of the Turks may be considered, perhaps, as the first step in the decline of Islam, but their acquaintance with the rising nations of Christendom may be ranked as a more dangerous blow to its power. It became every day more evident that, while Christian States were growing annually more powerful, the true believer was sinking fast in the scale of nations. Vanquished in turn by Russia and Austria, he was only enabled to hold his ground by means of the dissensions among European powers. The French Revolution broke out, and the apostles of infidelity disseminated, even in the Turkish capital, their theories of liberty and equality. A modern Tamerlane conquered Egypt, and occupied Syria; and Mohammedan pride was humbled and debased by the consideration that the invaders of Africa and Spain were now doomed to be invaded with impunity. A few more years of success might have enabled Napoleon to abolish the Ottoman line, and to emulate the Asiatic con-

quests of Alexander ; but his downfall secured for the effete and tottering dynasty a brief respite from their inevitable fate.

Sultan Mahmoud was a prince of some talent, and greater ambition, but his judgment was not sufficiently solid to enable him to discharge the functions of a reformer. He was sensible of Frank superiority, and by no means blind to the obstacles which Mohammedanism placed in his way, but he fell into the mistake of supposing that the one could be attained by the adoption of European tactics, and a European costume, and the other overcome by diminishing the public faith in the national religion, while he was yet unprovided with any substitute for it. A wiser and more cautious mind would have seen that the civilization of a country, or of a race, can only prove successful when it is a development of what is good and valuable in earlier institutions. A true reformer must carefully collect and segregate the good of former ages, and, by amplifying and encouraging the influence which it already possesses, he must make it in time overpower and nullify what is bad and barbarous in the national institutions.

But the Sultan did exactly the reverse of all this. He seized with an eager and ill-judging haste upon foreign institutions, and sought to make them part and parcel of a system entirely opposed in its character to the usages of the Western world. The prejudices of his subjects were shocked by what they considered the indelicacy of the Frank costume, but Mahmoud disregarded their scruples to a degree which would not have been ventured on by Amurath or Murad. The professor of a picture-hating creed, he presented his portrait with great solemnity to his troops, and caused the idol (as a conscientious Mohammedan must have termed and considered it) to be saluted with imperial honors. His love of wine had been common to many of his predecessors, but few had displayed their indulgence in the forbidden liquid with such utter recklessness and contempt for public opinion.

Still, however, Mohammedanism continued the religion of the State, and the Sultan had even invoked its aid, when he unfurled the sacred banner of the Prophet, and called upon all true believers to march under its folds against the rebellious Janizaries. But the life and energy of the system, which once awoke the warlike and courageous of Asia to

deeds of the most chivalrous valor, had long ago been suffered to fall into decay.

The establishment of the Nizam Djedeed, or new soldiers, completed the ruin of Mohammedanism as a political system. It was tantamount to a declaration that the tactics and evolutions of Infidel Europe were far superior to the valor inspired by the words of the Prophet; and the continual employment of Christians in the highest and most responsible grades was in direct defiance to the traditions of centuries, which restricted the profession of arms to the Moslem alone.

Thus, at the close of Mahmoud's reign a complete change had passed over Turkish affairs. In lieu of the costly and flowing robes of former days, the pashas and the government officials appeared in European uniforms, which sat awkwardly upon them, and produced, sometimes, actions perfectly ludicrous in the eyes of a Frank. Pictures decorated the habitations of Mohammedans, dissection was introduced into the hospitals, much to the horror of the Ulemah, and newspapers were established to form an unnatural coalition between the new improvements and the Mohammedan religion.

The tidings of Turkey's advances in civilization brought a number of adventurers from different parts of Europe to aid in and assist the good work. Those persons, of whom their respective countries had grown weary, or who, having nothing to lose, thought they must be certain to gain something from the ignorance of the Turks, flocked in numbers to the ill-fated shores of Islam. The Polish wanderer, whose begging epistles and fictitious misfortunes were known to half the police of civilized Europe, the Italian patriot or assassin, the French apostle of Socialism and Communism, with all the scum and refuse of Europe, poured themselves in shoals upon the unfortunate Ottomans, and for a time succeeded in imposing on their credulity.

Quacks abounded in every part of Turkey, whose drugs and lancets destroyed more annually than the steel of their crusading ancestors. Drill sergeants, cavalry instructors, ship builders, and all who could minister to the newly-awakened zeal for reform, repaired to the Turkish dominions. The late arrivals pretended not to strictness of manners or of morals. Some turned Mohammedans that they might enjoy the privileges of polygamy; others preserved the

name of Christian, only to render it contemptible by their vices. Drunkenness and debauchery followed in the footsteps of these European reformers, and their conduct became so thoroughly vile and despicable that the Turks themselves recoiled in horror from the society of these specimens of civilization. It was observed, that in proportion as a town increased in its foreign inhabitants, it increased in vice ; and the Osmanli of the old school alluded triumphantly to this fact as an evidence of the evil fruits of infidel civilization.

The young pashas, and the sons of the more respectable Turkish families who shared the festivities of Mahmoud, gave their full support and co-operation to his projects of reform. The study of French, of Italian, and even of English, became fashionable, and the members of young Turkey imbibed with assiduity the lessons of civilization from the novels and newspapers of Europe. The thin veil of conformity to the external rites of their religion was by degrees laid aside ; and, while the Turk of the old school observed punctiliously the stated hours of prayer, even in the midst of the most crowded saloon, the reforming Osmanlis retired from view, and seemed ashamed of owning that they performed their devotions at all.

A neglect of the external precepts of their religion was followed by marked disobedience to its moral injunctions, and the profligacy and sensuality of the new school far exceeded the more regulated debauchery of earlier times. The prevalent dissoluteness has produced cruelty and indifference to the feelings of others, and it is said that the unhappy victims of the slave markets dread nothing so much as to be purchased by a Frank resident, or by one of the reforming school.

Bribery and corruption have been inherent vices in Eastern courts since the earliest times. We find in Scripture frequent allusions to the injustice of judges, and to the practice of biasing the course of justice by gifts. At the present day, there is scarcely a single case brought before the cadis, in which both plaintiff and defendant are not made to pay largely for the administration of the law. All decisions are drawn from the Koran, but when its text is embarrassed and obscure, reference is made to the works of the commentators. If these fail to render the required information, the judge places the Koran respectfully on his head, and gives such a decision as he deems most in accordance with the rules of justice. Some-

times wills of a strange and eccentric character elicit the subtilty and ingenuity of the judicial mind. One of these appears singular enough to deserve insertion here.

A certain merchant left in his last testament seventeen horses, to be divided among his three sons according to the following proportion: The first was to receive half, the second one-third, and the youngest a ninth part of the whole. But, when they came to arrange about the division, it was found that, to comply with the terms of the will, without sacrificing one or more of the animals, was impossible. Puzzled in the extreme, they repaired to the *cadi*, who, having read the will, observed that such a difficult question required time for deliberation, and commanded them to return after two days.

When they again made their appearance, the judge said, "I have considered carefully your case, and I find that I can make such a division of the seventeen horses among you as will give each more than his strict share, and yet not one of the animals shall be injured. Are you content?"

"We are, O judge," was the reply.

"Bring forth the seventeen horses, and let them be placed in the court," said the *cadi*.

The animals were brought, and the judge ordered his groom to place his own horse with them. He bade the eldest brother count the horses.

"They are eighteen in number, O judge," he said.

"I will now make the division," observed the *cadi*. "You, the eldest, are entitled to half; take then nine of the horses. You, the second son, are to receive one-third; take, therefore, six: while to you, the youngest, belongs the ninth part, namely, two. Thus, the seventeen horses are divided among you; you have each more than your share, and I may now take my own steed back again."

"*Mashallah!*" exclaimed the brothers, with delight, "O *cadi*, your wisdom equals that of our Lord Suleiman Ibn Daood."

Few travelers can have journeyed for any distance in Asiatic Turkey, without having been struck with the number of ruined villages which one encounters everywhere. Even in the great towns and cities, the quantity of houses, either wholly or partially in ruins, is very great. Diarbekir, *Mardin*, *Nisibis*, and Mosul were large and flourishing cities

about four centuries ago. The two former, and the latter, have very few houses that are not in some degree in a dilapidated state, while the whole of ancient Nisibis, which Abulfeda describes as an extensive and populous town, in his time, has entirely disappeared from its site, and a few mud huts bear the name of one of the most powerful cities of former days.

This fact marks the great and gradual diminution which has taken place in the numbers of the population since the conquest of these countries by the Turks. It must be borne in mind, also, that no new cities or towns have arisen to supply the places of those which have been, and are thus rapidly sinking to decay. Should the decrease in the population go on in the same ratio, the close of the next three hundred years will find the whole of Mesopotamia and Assyria in as desolate a condition as the mounds of Nineveh. Vast and uncultivated solitudes will occupy the sites of some of the largest and most celebrated cities of Asiatic Turkey.

The Ottoman dominions are inhabited by different races, who, separated from each other by various prejudices, agree in a common hatred of the Osmanlis. The Kurds and Arabs, although sincere, if not bigoted followers of the creed of Islam, entertain a greater aversion to the Turks than to the Christians. The latter are divided among themselves, but lack only union to make them formidable opponents of the Turkish rule. Thus the enmity which exists between the several heterogeneous materials of which the Sultan's dominions are composed, alone prevents their combining against the common enemy. Yet the same cause proves also an insurmountable obstacle in the way of reform.

The fear of increasing the power of one portion, or of exciting the prejudices of another part of their subjects, leads Turkish statesmen to prefer a stagnant calm to the necessary agitation which projects of useful reform could not fail of producing. An attempt to limit the authority of the pashas might induce these governors to form projects of independent sovereignty, which would be certain to find support from some at least of the discontented. A chief who could stir up the old Moslem fanaticism, either of the Kurds or Arabs, might succeed in detaching from the Sultan's dominions many considerable districts of the present Turkish empire. Should the Roman Church be able to unite in one the various Christ-

ian sects, a second Peter the Hermit might rouse the warlike inhabitants of Mount Lebanon and Kurdistan to undertake another crusade. The powers of Europe could scarcely with decency refuse their aid to an enslaved population of Christians struggling to be free.

Yet, notwithstanding all the oppression, tyranny, and stupidity which characterize the Ottoman rule, the individual Turk is far from participating in the vices of his superiors, and of his government. He is not naturally cruel or avaricious; he is a lover of his children, and by no means an unkind husband. If the customs or prejudices of his country, and the ignorance and childishness of Oriental females, prevent his treating his wife in the European style, she is seldom the victim of brutality. Our English notions respecting polygamy, female slavery, and unfortunate wives sown up for the least trifle in a sackful of snakes, are somewhat exaggerated. Fiendlike acts of cruelty do occur occasionally, but they emanate from the pashas and men in power, who have frequently little of the pure Osmanli blood in their veins. They are, generally, the sons or the descendants of slaves, or of Georgian adventurers who have embraced Islamism.

The genuine Osmanli hates the trouble and fatigue of power; he loves to spend his days on a carpet, engaged in contemplation, and inhaling the fumes of his chibouque. He is not sanguinary, except when violently excited, and then he becomes a tiger. He is charitable to excess, and a strict observer of the good as well as of the evil precepts of El Islam. He is childlike in his simplicity, and loves the amusements of a child. Yet, when once his courage is stirred up, and his blood on fire, he will fight like a Spartan. In the field, he has always shown himself the true descendant of the conquerors of Asia.

Yet the Turk is conscious that his empire is waning, and his day of dominion passing away. On his countenance sits the shade of mute and dignified resignation, as he observes with a sigh that the Ottoman rule is drawing near its close. His favorite tenet of predestination, however, serves to soothe the disappointed feelings which are provoked by national vanity. The hand of Allah is working the decay of his people, and it is no degradation to be vanquished by Him who is All Powerful. With an earnestness of faith which

it is impossible not to admire, the Turk sees the working of Providence in his day of downfall as much as in his hour of success. He only regrets that his rulers have not suffered his nation to fall with dignity, but have sought to uphold her by arts and customs borrowed from the Franks, which innovations he views with a mixture of hatred and contempt. The true Osmanli would rather meet his fate with the scimitar of his fathers in his hand, than be indebted to the Franks for instruction in warfare, only to be more completely vanquished by them at last.

The religion of the Turk is more an affair of feeling, of policy, and of ancestral pride, than of intellectual conviction. He does not study it like the Arab, nor does he share the blind bigotry of the Kurd. He reveres its morality, and conforms strictly to its ritual, but he cannot argue in its favor. Perhaps one of his chief objections against abandoning it would be the recollection that, under its standard, his fathers so often marched to victory. But the Osmanli of the present day has little animosity to Christianity as a spiritual creed. He will read with delight the moral lessons of the Gospel, and treats with the deepest respect the names of Jesus and Mary.

Under a good government, and enlightened by Christianity, there can be little doubt but that the Osmanli race might be greatly improved. They are honest, moral, and courageous. Their faults proceed from the workings of a depraved and corrupt system of tyranny, based on the absurdities of a false and contradictory creed. In order, therefore, to improve or to exalt the Turks as a nation, Mohammedanism must be destroyed. It is not merely a religious, but a political system. It is entwined with the whole fabric of Turkish law. Every act of reform is a blow inflicted upon it. Some have thought that it may be modified or adapted to new measures, or confined to the limited sphere of a mere moral code. But all acquainted with the character of Islamism, must be aware that it cannot be reduced to the level of a series of philosophical or religious dogmas. Its motto must always be "aut Cæsar, aut nullus."

To assert that part of an inspired code is false or erroneous is to infer the falsehood of the whole. If the Prophet erred, and deceived mankind as to his political regulations, might not his revelations affecting ritual and morals be

equally untrue? The impostor of Mecca legislated for a small community, and for a barbarous age: he could not foresee the extension of his system, or the causes which would lead to its ultimate decay and ruin. He aspired to teach men, not only religion, but politics and civil law. He would fain have been a second Moses, but he forgot that the object of the Mosaic regulations confined them to a single nation, and to a certain limited period. But it is the fault of all false systems to grow obsolete in the course of time. The divine origin of Christianity is best proved by its elasticity—by its power of combination with every varied form of political authority. He who could foresee the changes which would take place in the governments of this world, and adapt his system to meet every exigency, must have been more than man.

There are, at present, however, many difficulties in the way of the abolition of Mohammedanism. According to Turkish law, a convert to Christianity would suffer capital punishment, and the dread of this might operate as an obstacle in the way of any missionary efforts. The Christians of the East require themselves instruction and enlightenment, while, from the long period of slavery and degradation which they have sustained, they would be ill suited to communicate a knowledge of the Gospel to the haughty Osmanli. The latter would look coldly on the mysterious dogmas and bare ritual of either American or Dissenting Protestantism; nor perhaps might the worship of the Church of England be sufficiently showy and symbolical to attract an Eastern mind.

The Roman Church would, perhaps, have more advantages and attractions; but the veneration of pictures and images must come in contact with the Hebrew element, which appears so conspicuously in all modern Oriental forms of religion. Perhaps, however, the Turks could be induced to receive the teaching of the Gospel, and embody it in a church system of their own. This would be more successful than the attempt to force upon them any of the rituals of Europe.

There remains a most important question for the politicians of our age to decide, and that is, "What shall be done with Turkey?" It is impossible that she can continue in her present state for many years longer. To attempt to introduce reforms while the Mohammedan religion is dominant,

will result in nothing but disappointment. On the other hand, the question of partition is attended with many practical difficulties. The jealousy of the great powers must always hold each other in check; and extensive colonization on the part of either would be viewed with suspicion, and excite, it may be, serious opposition from the rest.

A Christian kingdom could hardly be formed in the present divided condition of Oriental Christendom; and it could not be maintained without foreign aid. Nor has the experiment tried in the case of Greece produced such results as would encourage politicians to repeat it in Asia. Union among the Christians might lead to something, but this union could only be effected, humanly speaking, under the auspices of the Church of Rome; and then French influence would be predominant.

Yet something must be done, and the sooner active measures are taken to arrest the progress of decay and desolation the better. My own experience of the Turkish character would lead to the conclusion that the abolition of Mohammedanism, and the introduction of Christianity among them, might yet operate favorably on the destinies of the Osmanli race. European influence could easily obtain the repeal of the barbarous and inhuman statute which fetters the liberty of conscience; and the Turks, freed from the shackles imposed by the creed of the false prophet, would be at liberty to adopt and to carry out measures of wholesome reform. The manly and common sense features of the race would be allowed free scope, and the educated and enlightened Osmanli might yet occupy no mean position among the nations of the earth.

Our prejudices against the cruelties, barbarities, and perfidy which have characterized the government, must not blind our eyes to the virtues of the individuals who suffer from them. The Turk has been the victim of a bad political system, and of a sensual and immoral creed; yet honesty and morality have not entirely forsaken him. Placed by the side of the false, treacherous, and deceitful Greek, he shows to advantage, even by the confession of the most prejudiced of travelers. His vices are the vices of his education; his good qualities are his own.

Whatever may be the difficulties which beset the arrangement of the Eastern question, it is to be hoped that the pre-

sent state of stagnation and decay may speedily be put an end to, and that we may see once more the blessings of civilization and true religion extending themselves over the fairest and most fertile regions of the habitable world. The knowledge that thousands of oppressed and miserable beings are turning their eyes towards their European brethren for succor and deliverance should awaken in our hearts the emotions of sympathizing humanity, and induce us to do our utmost to procure for them such assistance as may relieve them from their present state of destructive inaction and ruinous decay.



CHAPTER XIX.

A Syrian Catholic Church. Journey to Arbela. Alexander and Darius. Arbela. The Jew. The Christians of Shucklaw. Return to Mosul.

THE longer I resided at Mosul, the more intimate I became with different individuals among its Mohammedan and Christian inhabitants. The Orientals require very few of those ceremonies of introduction which are considered so important by Englishmen in every part of the globe. Leave to enter a house, a seat on the diwan, a pipe, and coffee may easily be obtained by the merest stranger in an Eastern town who understands the manners and language of the country. Some reserve is practiced by Mohammedans, who rarely cultivate the society of Christians, but this coolness, which is founded entirely on religious prejudice, is rapidly dying away.

The nature of my mission to Mosul rendered it desirable that I should study both the tenets and the ceremonies of the Eastern churches. Their Sunday service usually commenced at six o'clock in the morning, so that I had frequent opportunities of attending the celebration of their rites, as our own prayers did not begin till eleven o'clock.

On one occasion, a friend of mine, who was a Syrian Catholic priest, and the rector of a church near to my abode, invited me to be present at the morning service. I went, accompanied by Toma, but found on arrival that Kas Yusef

had made preparations for receiving me which did not exactly accord with either my expectations or my tastes. I had anticipated a seat on the matting among the congregation, and, indeed, had already taken possession of a quiet corner, when a message from the priest arrived that I would "come up higher." Somewhat surprised, I followed the messenger, a deacon, behind the stone screen which divides the sanctuary from the choir. Beside the altar was a large chair lined with tarnished velvet, in which, notwithstanding my protestations and remonstrances, I was almost forcibly installed. Neither priests nor deacons would hear of my sitting cross-legged among the people.

"It is not your custom," said they; "we know that Franks cannot dispense with chairs; so sit down quietly, and Kas Yusef will show you the places, and Deacon Matthew shall stand by to explain what is going on."

It was in vain I protested that I needed neither explanation nor aid, and even quietly hinted that the before-mentioned gentlemen might be much better employed; my friends would hear of no excuse. A large volume was pushed into my hands, Kas Yusef turned, from time to time, over the leaves, to point out the different places, while Deacon Matthew kept up a running commentary *sotto voce* in Arabic on the Syrian service. I received several fumigations with the incense, and after all was over, I made a vow that I would never again go in state, as it were, to an Oriental church. Afterwards, I used to walk in without notice after the service had begun, and take my seat in some obscure corner, although many of my native friends, both clergy and laity, objected seriously to my proceedings as undignified.

The affairs of the Nestorians continued in an unsatisfactory and unsettled state, but an order was obtained from the Turkish government that the numerous captives should be set at liberty. This intelligence was received with no small degree of concern by those who had purchased any of the Nestorian prisoners, and some endeavored to elude compliance by leaving Mosul and the vicinity with their late purchases. Every measure, however, that could be taken to prevent their departure was put in operation, and numerous slaves were in this manner rescued from a cruel and hopeless captivity.

One day, intelligence came that several captives had been

removed to Arbil, the ancient Arbela, and, as it was more than probable that the governor of that town might be bribed to connive at their being transported beyond the Turkish frontier, my friend B—— determined to go down there in person, and gained from me a willing consent to accompany him. We left home at about two o'clock in the afternoon, and, after three hours' ride, reached Bagh Tolli, a large village of Syrians, direct east from Mosul. To the north-east of the village was a range of hills, at the foot of which is situated the monastery of Mar Daniel, mentioned frequently in the pages of Assemani. The ruins of four churches attest the former extent and populous condition of Bagh Tolli, but, like all towns and villages of Asiatic Turkey, its inhabitants have very much diminished in point of numbers. They were suffering also from internal dissensions, for nearly a fourth part of the families in the village had joined the papal Syrians, a circumstance which excited perpetual bickerings and ill feeling.

At about five miles distance from Bagh Tolli, we came to the banks of the Hazir, a branch of the greater Zab, and generally identified with the ancient Bumadus. Near this river, Quintus Curtius tells us that Darius had encamped on the eve of that decisive battle which decided the fate of the Persian monarchy. He had crossed the Tigris some miles to the south of Nimroud, and, passing through Arbil, had forded the Lycus, or Great Zab, from the banks of which he marched to the Bumadus, where he halted to await the coming up of Alexander.

The fertile plains of Mesopotamia were then experiencing the sad consequences of warfare. A band of six thousand Persian horse had been ravaging the country to the west of the Tigris, by the express orders of Darius, and the mouldering flames which had consumed the produce of those fruitful fields were emitting dense columns of smoke as the Macedonian army passed along.* A dark and mistlike cloud hovered over the blackened relics of cultivation, and induced the invaders to fear the existence of an ambush between themselves and the Tigris. Their scouts, however, reported that the road was clear, and Alexander reached and forded this rapid stream, in the mid-channel of which the water came up to the horses' necks.†

* Quint. Curtius, lib. 4.

† Ibid.

The passage of the Tigris was effected without the slightest molestation from the enemy. It took place some miles to the south of Nimroud, although the historian does not mention the crossing of the Zab by Alexander. A bold and decisive policy would have suggested the ford of the Tigris as the place of battle, but it was the fate of Darius to suffer from the vacillation and indecision of his counselors and of his own mind. Another alternative lay before him, which perhaps, indeed, he intended originally to have adopted. Not far from the banks of the Bumadus rose the mountains of Kurdistan, within whose winding and intricate defiles he might have laughed to scorn the efforts of his pursuers. Among the names of the numerous Persian auxiliaries, we find the Cadusii mentioned, who were probably the Cardusii or Carduchii, the old antagonists of Xenophon and the ancestors of the modern Kurds. If these wild people, themselves of Persian descent, had been disposed to receive within their mountains the last monarch of their race, a small and select band would have sufficed to arrest the progress of the invaders. Entangled among the rocky regions of Kurdistan, they would have been exposed to dangers, against which, both their courage and their discipline might have proved inadequate to defend them. It is probable, however, that this design, if, indeed, it was ever entertained, was frustrated by the temptations which the nature of the ground between the Hazir and the Zab offered to one whose principal force consisted of horsemen.

The union of the two rivers forms a species of delta, the superficies of which is covered by mounds and slight undulations, presenting few or no impediments to the irregular movements of Eastern cavalry; yet the uneven nature of the soil might seriously interfere with the complicated manœuvres of the phalanx, justly esteemed the chief strength of the opposing host. The site seemed one of the most favorable that could have been chosen for the display of the principal advantages possessed by the Persians, and Darius might, without incurring the reproach of vain confidence, have flattered himself with the hope of complete success. The result, however, is too well known to need repetition. The same sun which had shone on the gayly-accountred ranks of the Persians, and had received their adoration, was destined to behold their defeat. Before he had sunk below the horizon

in the west, Darius was crossing the Zab, a hopeless and despairing fugitive.

Doctor Grant has suggested, and the notion is not void of plausibility, that the Syriac name of the neighboring district, Beth Garmæ, which means literally the house or place of bones, derives its origin from the sanguinary contest which was known afterwards as the battle of Arbela.* The historians who have recorded it mention the village of Guagau-mela as the nearest inhabited region, but there are, at present, no traces of such an appellation in the immediate vicinity.

After a ride of two hours and a half from Bagh Tolli, we reached the ford of the Zab, which is opposite the village of Kellak. This rapid and dangerous river derives its present name from the Chaldean word signifying a wolf, with which also its Greek appellation of Lycus corresponds. It probably owes its title to the violence with which its waters rush along when the mountain rivulets have been swollen by the rains, and discharge their streams into its channel. At these seasons, it is considered dangerous to cross, and very frequently rafts and horses are borne along with impetuous force into the Tigris, with which the Zab effects a junction near Nimroud.

The mode of transit is very simple and of ancient date. A rudely constructed raft rests upon inflated skins, and, in this manner, conveys not only passengers, but even heavy merchandize across the river. The horses swim over, guided by a man who supports himself on two small inflated skins. The rafts are the same as those used at Mosul, which periodically descend as far as Baghdad with passengers and goods. When they undertake this latter journey, however, a small hut or cabin is formed of branches and boughs of trees, beneath the shelter of which the traveler reposes during his voyage. At night, the rafts anchor near the shore, and are sometimes exposed to the visitations of unwelcome intruders.

On one occasion, a gentleman had secured one of these rafts at Mosul, and, at first, found no reason to repent of his choice. His cabin was comfortable enough, and reclining on his temporary diwan, he found himself able to while away the time with a volume of Chateaubriand. A small window

* "Nestorians or the Lost Tribes," chap. iv.

at the side of his hut was generally left open towards evening to admit any passing breeze that might feel disposed to enter and beguile the tedium of an anchorage which presented few attractions to the eye.

The first evening of his voyage, M. — thought he might enjoy the prospect, and surveyed it from his window. But he saw nothing but a continuation of barren plains reaching down to within a few yards of his raft. With a shrug, he retreated to his diwan, lighted a cigar, and was soon engrossed by the charms of "Atala." Suddenly, his aperture was darkened, a dark countenance with shaggy hair intruded itself, and a rough voice growled out in no very courteous tones the fatal syllables, "Backsheesh." M. — was, at first, much alarmed, as he had some valuable property about him, but recovering his presence of mind, he stepped out on what I may call the deck of the raft to reconnoiter the numbers of the enemy. They consisted of three half naked Arabs, who stood holding the raft, with the water up to their waists. M. — thought, at first, of cutting his cable and floating off, but he perceived that the raftmen were half dead with fright, and he feared the result of an attempt to escape. He determined, therefore, to parley with the foe, and, being a good Arabic scholar, entered into conversation with his captors, and, after a little discussion, succeeded in obtaining their concurrence in his departure by the welcome present of a few pounds of Mosul tobacco.

The sons of Ishmael transferred the much-coveted luxury to the shore, where they sat smoking nearly half the night, and the next morning saluted their late captive with loud acclamations and good wishes as he floated off gayly, congratulating himself upon his fortunate escape.

We were nearly an hour crossing the Zab, and found the current very violent about midway. After strenuous exertions, however, we arrived in safety at Kellak, but, with the exception of one or two old men, the village had been entirely deserted by its inhabitants. Those who were left behind informed us that a band of predatory Kurds, having paid them a visit the day before, had plundered the village and murdered two of the people, on account of which all the survivors abandoned their dwellings and took refuge in Arbela.

"Those Kurds are true sons of the Accursed," said the

ferryman ; "when Mohammed Pasha, peace be upon him, was alive, they dared not have made free with even the sole of an old slipper. He has gone now, and every thief of a Kurd that can muster a dozen idle rascals together makes up for lost time by spoiling honest people, and taking their lives if they resist."

"But the pasha was an oppressor, and a tyrant," I observed.

"It is true," was his reply ; "yet still he kept the country quiet, and these Kurds within their mountains. We never saw their ill-favored visages in our neighborhood before, may confusion light upon them ! As for oppression, O Effendi, we are used to that, and probably may suffer as much, or more, under the next pasha, as we did under him that is gone. Still it is something to wake in the morning with a whole throat, and not be roused up at midnight with your roof all on fire, your women screaming, and your children spitted like Kabob on the spears of those unclean sons of darkness. Heavy taxes are bad, but they are better than all this."

I felt much disposed to agree with the sentiments of the worthy ferryman, who, however, was a native of a village on the other side, and after expressing my hope that they might remain free from a similar visitation, I mounted my horse, and rode on to rejoin my companions, who were some distance in advance. As I proceeded, I could not help contrasting the feelings which an occurrence like that above mentioned would excite in England, with those produced by it in this country. In our own land, a single murder would be the talk of the whole neighborhood, but here the violent death of two persons, and the plunder of a village, seemed too much of an every day event to create much notice. The people who were only a few miles distant from the scene of the atrocity professed their utter ignorance of it.

It was now near evening, but as we had not deemed it prudent to pass the night at Kellak, in consequence of the attack by the Kurds, we rode on to Tov Zawa, a village of about fifty houses, situated on the southern bank of the river. We had but poor accommodations here, however, and were glad to leave it the next morning at half-past nine.

For a short time, we followed the course of the Zab, having *on the left* a range of low hills, which intervened between us

and the river. At length our road bore round in an easterly direction, and we passed the villages of Oghlan, Kiouy Itch, and Kiouy Jaghan, arriving at Ain Quawa about 2 P. M. The latter place is situated on an extensive plain, bounded to the north-east by low hills. The inhabitants were nearly all of them Christians of the Chaldean Church, and ardently attached to the sway of Rome. One of their priests visited us to ask whether or no the English were Christians. He gazed on an Arabic translation of our Liturgy with wonder and surprise, but made no comments upon it.

Near Ain Quawa we observed several plantations which were irrigated in a singular manner. A number of wells had been sunk, each at a small distance from the other, which supplied water to the cultivators. These were connected with each other by a species of aqueduct or channel beneath the surface. The reason of this strange arrangement did not appear, but its origin was ascribed to very early times.

We could discern clearly and distinctly the mound and minaret of Arbil from Ain Quawa, and an hour's ride brought us to the suburb of that town, where the chief object deserving of notice was a broken tower, which serves as a landmark for many miles around. This tower, which is attached to the ruins of a mosque, resembled greatly in size and shape the round minaret at Mosul, connected with the dilapidated building still bearing the name of the Prophet George. The latter inclines almost to the same extent as the leaning tower of Pisa, the fashion of which was probably introduced from the East. The minaret at Arbil probably measured about 120 feet in height, and was surrounded by three rings of a bluish color, which were probably intended to strengthen the shaft. I made an attempt to ascend the staircase, but found it so dark and blocked up with rubbish, that I desisted.

The aspect of Arbil is rendered imposing by the elevation of the upper town on an artificial mound about 150 feet in height, the sides of which are plentifully covered with marsh-mallow. The lower town is built in a straggling way at the foot of the mound, in the vicinity of which fragments of the old wall are still visible.

We were quartered at the house of a Turkish bin bashi, or colonel, in the lower town. Our host was absent, but his wife commanded the servants to furnish us with everything that was necessary. He had married two ladies, one for the

sake of interest, and the other for affection, but his servant hinted that his time was not pleasantly spent between them. Each had her own separate establishment, with servants and slaves attached, and the bin bashi was at present residing in the house of his other wife. Great jealousy existed between the two, and all the arts of espionage and intrigue were resorted to, in order to discover when a present had been made by the husband. If he gave a black slave to the first, the second thought herself wronged if she did not obtain two, and thus every outlay that was made in one quarter was expected to be doubled in the other. With these continual demands on his pocket, it may be imagined that the matrimonial happiness of the poor man was very small, but he had to undergo in addition the humors of his two helpmates. Incensed by mutual animosity, each regaled his ear with abuse of her rival, or insinuations that his love for her personally was not sincere. Daggers and cups of poison, which in England we regard as harmless figures of speech, are not unfrequently used more literally in Turkey, and the death of a husband or a rival may very commonly be traced to the jealous fury of a slighted and suspicious woman.

On walking out to inspect the lower town, we found the principal streets intersected by gutters three feet in breadth, and traversed at intervals by small bridges of brick. The houses seemed for the most part to be constructed from the latter material, and were covered with a species of white-wash or cement. On the eastern side of the mound we perceived some sepulchres covered with domes, and resembling in shape doubtless those whited tombs of which our Saviour spoke, when he cautioned his disciples against the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees.* The form of these chambers of death varies in different parts of the East. In one place four walls inclose and protect from intruders the stone sarcophagus which contains the ashes of the departed; while in another, the dome is supported on pillars only, and the sides are left open. When the latter is the case, the sepulchres frequently serve as asylums for the poor and houseless, as well as for thieves and bad characters.

Beyond these tombs we found some gardens and vineyards, stretching out into the plain and affording a pleasant retreat

* Matt. xxiii. 27.

for the townsmen during the heats of summer. There is nothing so much delights an Oriental as to "make kaif."* With his trusty pipe under his arm and his tobacco pouch in the breast of his gown, he sallies forth from the dark and narrow streets of the town to the suburbs, where an assemblage of trees or vines, enclosed by a low wall or fence from the road, obtains the name of "bostun" or garden. If a running stream passes through the midst, all the better; and if a troop of jugglers or strolling musicians should be attracted thither, their presence will add materially to the satisfaction of the kaif makers.

Stretching his carpet under a tree, the Oriental gazes with half shut eyes on the ripple of the water, or watches with apparent interest the curling vapors which ascend from his chibouque. There is nothing of the gay boisterous merriment of Northern Europe, none of the light vivacity of the South, connected with an Eastern merry-making. They meet to smoke, perhaps also to drink some beverage stronger than coffee, though this is seldom; to converse and to listen to the oft-told stories which they have laughed or shuddered at times without number before. No women mingle with their unbendings, for it is considered wrong for the two sexes to mix together in public, though among the Christians this feeling is passing away. When evening comes on, they retire to their homes, pleased and gratified with a day's kaif, while apparently so little has occurred to call forth either pleasure or satisfaction.

As we returned, we passed through the bazaar in the lower town. It was a miserable collection of stalls arranged in rows, forming alleys partly open and partly covered with boughs and dry leaves. A great crowd came to stare at us as we walked along, who bestowed from time to time no very flattering comments on our costume. As we proceeded, we observed an altercation going on near one of the stalls, which was destined to terminate in no very pleasant manner. The owner of the shop, a tall and portly-looking Jew of about thirty years of age, had given dire offence to a customer, who, though yet in his teens, was a true believer, and determined to exercise the privileges of one. After heaping on

* This word is not very susceptible of translation, but it generally implies "pleasure," "amusement."

the poor Jew many stinging epithets of abuse, in a shrill and piping voice, the urchin raised his small hand and struck the man on the face. The insulted shopkeeper could almost have annihilated his assailant with a single blow, but his hands were tied by the degradation of his people. He received the cuff with quiet submission, raising only a most dismal howl, which he hoped, perhaps, might excite the compassion of his opponent. The boy seemed at first rather startled by his own act, but soon recovering his composure, he spat in the man's face, and departed.

"That young scapegrace merits richly the bastinado," said I to one of the governor's attendants who accompanied us.

"He is a sheitan, that boy," was his reply; "but then you know, O Effendi, that he is young, and the other is only a Jew."

Only a Jew! A Mohammedan will often excuse even murder in this manner, and think no more of it than of the slaughter of a bullock. There was a time when they would have said only a Christian, but they have been soundly beaten since then into a little more forbearance. Yet a few years ago, no Frank could enter Damascus in his own dress, or on horseback, without being exposed to the insults of the mob. The first European who ventured there with a hat on his head obtained the undignified surname of Abou'l Tanjara, the father of a pot.

After we had taken a little repose, we sallied forth to visit the upper town. It has two entrances, one of which faces the north-east, while the other is due south. We ascended by the side of the mound, passed over a drawbridge, and entered a dark narrow gateway, which brought us into the court-yard of the castle. Around the outer rim of the mound, the backs of the houses, being joined together, formed a species of rampart enclosing the whole of the upper town. When we reached the court-yard, we found it occupied, as usual, by groups of armed attendants, kawasses, and Albanian irregulars, who all looked very fierce and ferocious, with their long mustachios, which they twisted to and fro between their fingers as though they were handling the hair of the slain.

The Governor of Arbil was seated in the upper corner of a long room, decorated with warlike devices, and filled with the chief people of the town.

He was a young man for his station, but had been appointed to it as a distant relation of Mohammed Pasha. We took our seats, and, during the coffee and pipes, the usual conversation ensued.

How did we like the country?

Praise be to God, we liked it very much.

Did we intend staying?

Inshallah, we might, or we might not.

Was England a large country, and was it true that the English were a species of Mohammedans, and broke images wherever they found them?

These and other similar questions, with which I will not trouble the reader, having been responded to in a satisfactory manner, the conversation turned on the Nestorian captives, whom his excellency promised at parting, on his head and his eyes, should be forthcoming at Mosul in the course of a week. I am happy to be able to add that he kept his word, and we enjoyed the gratification of welcoming another band of rescued captives, and of witnessing their interview with those of their relatives who were already in the city. Tears ran down the sunburnt cheeks of the poor creatures, as they embraced and kissed each other, pouring forth all the warm and tender epithets of Oriental affection; mothers clasped their daughters to their bosoms, and husbands hailed once more the partners of their homes, freed from the stern and degrading yoke of the Moslem. The patriarch watched the meeting, but, as he lifted up his hand to bless the new comers, his emotions overpowered him, and he wept aloud.

But I must now return to Arbil, where a scene of confusion has taken place since our absence at the castle. The whole of the lower town has been thrown into a dreadful state of alarm by the report that two horses, who were quietly feeding near the minaret, have been carried off by the Kurds. The inhabitants anticipated nothing less than a general attack and indiscriminate massacre from the barbarians of the hills. A large crowd had assembled, and were discussing measures of defence before our door. By and by the exclamations of *Mashallah* had progressed to *Inshallah*, and at last terminated in "*Baccalum*."* Public confidence was, however, in some measure restored by the announcement that the chief of the

* We shall see.

police had secured one of the thieves, and was bearing him in chains to the dungeon in the upper town.

Soon after the capture had taken place, a Christian arrived from Shucklawā, a town situated on a mountain of the same name, about a day's journey from Arbela, bringing tidings of a shameful outrage which had just been perpetrated by the Kurds of the neighborhood. During the vigorous administration of Mohammed Pasha, the Christians of Shucklawā had lived in peace and amity with their Moslem neighbors. When his death, however, became generally known, the Kurds, animated by the success of their late enterprise against the Christians of the hills, determined on introducing a little persecution into the hitherto quiet community. Their hostility against the detested Nazarenes was inflamed by the persuasions and harangues of a mollah of their own race, who was by no means deficient in that fanatical bigotry which rages in the breasts of the majority of his brethren.

The Christian inhabitants of the village were peaceful cultivators, who had learned to bear oppression with a patient shrug. They had shared in none of the warlike measures resorted to by the Nestorians of the hills. As Chaldean adherents of the See of Rome, they were little disposed to sympathize with heretics, had their courage even impelled them to active resistance. But this mattered little, for they bore the hated name of Nazarene—that title which awakens the bitterest animosity in the bosom of a true Moslem. The mollah hated the Christians, and determined, in some way or other, to gratify his feelings of enmity against them.

An ancient church, which some said had been first erected in the fourth or fifth century, stood within the confines of the village. At its simple altar thousands of the forefathers of the humble Christians had knelt to celebrate the most sacred rites of their religion. In the hymns and psalms of the inspired Psalmist, they had forgotten their toils, and felt, for a time at least, the yoke of slavery less bitter and less galling. It was the only relic that bound them to the past—that recalled the old days of independence and freedom. Its furniture and sacred utensils offered no temptation to the spoiler. A metal cup and a paten of less value served for the celebration of the Holy Communion, while their tattered Liturgies were so worn, that the priest was obliged to trust to his memory for the holy words of prayer. Above the altar a plain

cross of stone reminded the pious villagers of the mysteries of their redemption, and of their own daily lot of suffering.

Into this church, a band of Kurds, headed by the mollah, forced their way in the night, beat the aged priest, who, by the light of a single lamp, was praying for his slumbering flock, snatched the cross from the altar, and dashed it with curses on the stone floor. They tore up the Liturgies, carried off the sacramental cup and paten, and committed in the sacred building actions which I will not pollute my page by describing.

Next day the frightened and insulted Christians contrived to send news of what had happened to Ain Quawa. The priest of that village was well known to the French consul at Baghdad, who, on hearing of the outrage, dispatched immediately his dragoman to the spot to make inquiries. Two witnesses were required, but such was their fear of the Kurds, that none of the Christians dared venture to accompany the dragoman to Baghdad, although the mollah boasted openly in the vicinity of his valorous achievements, and hinted, even, that he was willing to repeat the offence. At length two men, who had no families, on whom the Kurds might wreak their vengeance during their absence, consented to go and bear testimony before the Pasha of Baghdad. It was understood, however, that they were not to return to Mosul until more settled times.

The Eastern Christians look always to French authorities for protection against the tyranny of their enemies, nor can they be blamed for so doing. This protection, however, renders them devoted adherents to the French interests, and in the event of the dissolution of the Turkish empire, their aid might be valuable. England could, if she would, at little trouble to herself, secure the friendship of the non-papal Christians, and render, in this way, some important services to humanity. Did the people of England but know what cruelties are often practiced on their fellow Christians under the wretched rule of the Turks, the national benevolence, for which they are so justly celebrated, would induce them to make some strong representations on the subject to the Foreign Office.

Our interference on the behalf of the unfortunate Rayahs is a measure demanded imperatively from our national justice and Christianity. It would cost us nothing, not even a war-

like demonstration. Mohammedanism is too feeble to require the influence of arms; its rulers are not sufficiently attached to it to hazard any loss on its behalf. A simple order to our consuls to protect and assist Christians unjustly oppressed is all that would be requisite.

We left Arbil the next morning, after the capture of the horse-stealer, and, after riding seven hours and a half, reached Kermalis, a large Chaldean village to the north of the Zab, which is supposed by some to have been the Gaugamela of those historians who describe the actions of Alexander. It is clear that the battle must have taken place on this side of the Zab, as Quintus Curtius expressly mentions that Darius crossed that river in his flight to Arbela. Yet for my own part I should feel disposed to place it farther east, and nearer the Hazir or Bumadas.

We arrived at Mosul in safety, but unfortunate news awaited me at home. I had been presented with two young gazelles, of great beauty, whose natural shyness I succeeded, in some measure, in overcoming. They would eat out of my hand, and often beguiled a heavy hour by their playful and sportive gambols. During my absence, they had ascended to the terrace, and were diverting themselves there, when my servant suddenly made his appearance above, and gave chase to them. The scared and terrified animals bounded away, and in their attempt to leap over the vacant space between the terraces, they fell upon the hard stones in the court below, and were almost instantaneously killed.

CHAPTER XX.

Journey to Nimroud. The sabre. The priest's tale.

Soon after my return from Arbil, a Russian traveler arrived at Mosul, who was anxious to make a few excursions in the vicinity. As, however, he had been somewhat fatigued by solitary journeys, he was desirous of securing my company in his intended trip. I had placed one of the rooms of my house at his disposal; and finding that he was likely to prove

an agreeable compaignon de voyage, our arrangements for a short excursion were soon made, and carried into effect.

We obtained from the executive of Mosul the services of a government kawass, hired posthorses, and engaged a tall Chaldean, named Baho, to act as a guide and general servant. At 10 A. M. we had got our baggage safely arranged on the backs of two stout beasts of burden, and were preparing to mount, when my friend B—— and Kas Botros volunteered to bear us company as far as Nimroud. In Oriental travel the well-known proverb of "the more the merrier" is not without weight; and we gladly welcomed this addition to our party.

My old friend Mohammed had come in to smoke a morning pipe, and was much astonished at all this bustle in the court yard.

"Are you going back to Ingelterra?" inquired he.

"Not this time, my friend," I said; "we are merely going to Mar Matti, to Nimroud, and to Rabban Hormuzd."

"Mashallah!" exclaimed my old companion, "what people these Franks are! Here have I been living for twenty years in Mosul, and have never gone further, during that period, than to the Mound of Nebbi Yunas. Surely you cannot be in your senses to change this comfortable diwan for a rough saddle and a stony road. Then you will meet Kurds, Yezidees, and other obscene sons of Satan, who may rob you, or cut your throats. Allah knows, Khowajah Yacoub, whether I shall ever smoke another pipe in your house."

I endeavored to quiet his fears by the assurance that he would most probably see my face again in a week; and with this consolatory remark I rode off. My Russian friend had fully equipped himself for the dangers of the road. Two small pocket pistols hung suspended by a silver chain from his belt, in which were deposited two others of larger size, while by his side swung a heavy cavalry sword. Our servants were also armed, but I myself had neglected to take any weapons of offence or defence. I had not proceeded the length of the street, however, before I heard a voice calling me from behind. I stopped my horse, and, turning round, beheld Mohammed, in a state of breathless exhaustion, carrying a formidable sabre.

"Take at least this with you," he gasped, as he came up with me.

"O Mohammed," I exclaimed, "I am not afraid of the Kurds or the Yezidees ; and besides, if a great number attack me, it would be worse than madness to resist."

But Mohammed had settled in his own mind that I could not be safe without a sword ; and that the sight of one, even though resting peacefully in its scabbard, would scare away whole legions of the much-dreaded Kurds and Yezidees. I yielded to his entreaties, and consented to accept the loan of the formidable weapon.

"It is a true Shami,"* said he, as I fastened the belt ; "take it, and go in peace."

When we arrived at the bank of the river, we found a ferry boat had just come in with some Albanian mercenaries. Nothing could be more repulsive or ruffianly than the general appearance of these men. Their features were wan and sallow, the effects of unlimited debauchery, while their garments hung loose and ragged about them. The white kilts had become brown, and the lace of their jackets was torn and tarnished. They gazed upon us with marked ferocity, and would doubtless have felt great pleasure in cutting our throats, and rifling our baggage. They had just returned from laying waste three villages, and carried with them several strings of human ears, which were afterwards suspended near the chief gate of Mosul.

We crossed the Tigris, and directed our course along its eastern bank, in a southerly direction. After we had ridden on in peace for some time the sky grew dark and louring, and gave unmistakeable intimations of a heavy shower. We spurred on as fast as we could ; but all our efforts were ineffectual to avoid the rain, which soon began to pour down in torrents, and was accompanied with hail stones of an enormous size. Holding a hasty council on the top of one of the neighboring mounds, we speedily agreed as to the necessity of seeking for shelter, but it did not appear clear in what direction we were to commence the search. At length some one remembered that, not far from our present rendezvous, he had once encountered a small collection of huts, entitled Hawah Arslan, inhabited by Kurds. A run was accordingly made for the village, the poor, astonished post-horses were urged at a most unusual rate over the downs,

* Damascus blade.

and, after a brisk ride of an hour, we reached our destination, as wet as if we had stood for some time under a shower-bath.

The habitation which was allotted to us was a wretched hut, constructed of stones of all shapes and sizes, plastered with mud, and covered with a roof by no means impervious to the rain. At last, we found a dry spot whereon to kindle a fire, which was effected with no small difficulty, as the wood brought in for our use was green, and showed a decided antipathy to fire. After we had changed our clothes, we sat round the small table cross-legged, and demolished a pillaw with much appetite and satisfaction, though the rice was none of the cleanest, and abundantly mixed with small stones.

After dinner, the fire blazed up nobly, and we prepared to spend the evening as comfortably as we could, though the rain, which occasionally worked its way through the roof, by no means improved our position. By and by, the élite of the village came in to pay us a visit. We gave them some coffee and tobacco, they sat down with us, and we all became very good friends in a few minutes. They sang Kurdish songs, and told Kurdish stories about robber chieftains, who lived in castles perched on the wild crags of their native land. These gentlemen seemed to resemble the "barons bold" of our own early ballads. They were not very honest, nor very scrupulous. They had a decided penchant for cutting off heads, and carrying off unfortunate damsels, while they were by no means wanting in rude wit and dauntless courage. The listeners drank in eagerly the tales of these good old times, and seemed to think them much better than the present. Perhaps they were right.

My friend Kas Botros was accustomed, not without reason, to pique himself upon his story-telling abilities. Few events could happen that did not draw from him some anecdote or recital. He was by no means, therefore, disposed to sit a silent listener to semi-barbarian tales, and determined on taking the conversation into his own hands. The Kurdish villagers who understood Arabic were willing to listen, and the worthy Abuna thus began:—

"There lived, many years ago, a Sultan who was one of the most prosperous of men. He had gold, jewels, and wives without number, the choicest meats were placed upon his table, while lute players, with voices sweeter than that of

Israfil,* poured forth the most delicious sounds for his amusement and for the entertainment of his chosen guests. Three hundred sons and two hundred daughters claimed the honor of being his offspring, and the beauty or good qualities of each had been duly celebrated by the four hundred poets, who extolled in every species of verse the greatness and felicity of so sublime a monarch.

“What could he wish for more? Yet the nature of the sons of Adam is insatiable, and desires ever something new. The monarch grew weary of his pleasures; the gratifications in which he had formerly delighted disgusted him; and he sighed for the knowledge which is unlawful, and the possession of those secrets which Allah has wisely hidden from the children of men. By degrees he fell into a deep melancholy, diversified, however, by fits of irritation. The poet who ventured to celebrate his felicity in a new copy of verses was told that he was a liar for his pains; while another of his brethren, who presented to the monarch on his birthday a new poem, which he had expected would produce a gold dinaraline, received a serious bruise from the royal slipper, which the impatient Sultan had hurled at his head. The indignant man of letters went home and composed a satire on the ungrateful prince, which he sold to one of the Sultan’s enemies for two hundred pieces of gold.

“Withdrawing himself into the deep solitude of his gardens, the dissatisfied monarch pondered over his situation, and his desires. The fairest of his wives appeared to comfort and console him.

“‘Light of my eyes,’ said she, ‘wherefore art thou sad?’

“‘Plague of my heart,’ he replied, ‘why art thou troublesome? Surely the chattering of women is more intolerable than the croaking of the green bird of El-Hind. Begone, O daughter of the tongue, and leave me to my meditations.’

“The fair Shems-en-nahar was about to try the expedient of a shower of tears, but the pearly drops were arrested by the growing blackness of the royal brow. She saw that it was no time for trifling, and withdrew.

“‘Wali!’ she exclaimed to herself, as she departed, ‘our lord is surely medjnoon.’†

“The monarch bent his eyes on the ground, in moody

* The angel of song.

† Mad.

silence, when a slight agitation in the neighboring bushes attracted his attention. He raised his head, and encountered the sharp, half malicious gaze of a frightful dwarf, with a hump-back and a disproportioned nose, yet habited in rich and costly apparel.

“ ‘What do you here, O Father of Ugliness?’ said the Sultan, laying his hand on his sabre.

“ ‘Fear not, O king of the world,’ answered the new comer, with a hideous grimace, which he intended for a condescending smile. ‘I and my brethren have long watched with interest your desires, and the melancholy which at present consumes you. We would fain assist and satisfy you ; but people of our species never grant favors without expecting somewhat in return.’

“ ‘What tribute would you require as the reward of your help?’ eagerly inquired the Sultan.

“ ‘We will not deal hardly with you, O king,’ replied the dwarf ; ‘we can grant you all you desire, with the condition that, on the twelfth day of each month, at this present hour, you present yourself in this place, and, as an act of homage, place on the ground three bowls of milk. You must take notice, however, that this must be done by yourself, and by no other person.’

“ ‘That is easy enough,’ exclaimed the Sultan ; ‘I consent, with many thanks, to the compact.’

“ ‘Take then this ring,’ said the dwarf, ‘and beware that it quits not your finger, for know that if it touches water all that drink of the rivers and streams in your kingdom will instantly become mad. While you are the wearer, your most arduous wish will be obeyed.’

“ ‘Hearing and obedience,’ replied the Sultan, as he received the ring.

“It contained a single diamond, remarkable for its size and lustre; the king bent down his head to examine it, and when he again raised it the dwarf was gone.

“Delighted with his new acquisition, the Sultan determined to put its powers to the proof. He wished to view the desert city of Suleiman Ibn Daood, and immediately he found himself in the midst of its great square ; he desired to stand on the summit of El Kaf,* and behold he was surrounded

* A fabulous mountain, which, according to Oriental geographers, surrounds the world.

with clouds, and saw the gigantic birds of those regions flying along many miles below him. Nay, it is said that on one occasion curiosity led him as far as the centre of the earth, where he watched the gambols of the subterranean genii, and heard an assembly of Dives disputing learnedly on the properties of the seal of Solomon.

“The tempers of most people improve when they succeed in obtaining their own way, and our Sultan was no exception to the general rule. His politeness and affability delighted every one, Shems-en-nahar was in raptures, and even the discontented poet forgot the affront of the slipper, and, finding that he could not conveniently recall the satire he had sold, indemnified the monarch by composing one doubly bitter upon the purchaser.

“For some time, the king adhered faithfully to the terms of the compact, and presented with laudable regularity the appointed tribute. His fear of the dwarf, however, had greatly worn off, and he began to consider with himself the propriety of performing his homage by proxy. Unfortunately for his own peace, he had intrusted his wuzeer, Ibn Fadel, with the secret, and the crafty minister, who had been bred in a college of mollahs, treated his master’s scruples with polite derision. He represented to his majesty that it was but too great honor for a misbegotten dwarf to minister to the amusement of so great a king; that, in fact, the ring and its wonderful powers were but a ransom for a life justly forfeited by unwarrantable intrusion into the sacred precincts of the court; and finally, that kings, as the vicegerents of Allah, had undoubtedly a right to do what they thought proper, and were not bound by the same ties of obligation or gratitude which influence common men.

“‘But my promise, O wuzeer,’ remonstrated the Sultan.

“‘Gracious sir,’ argued the minister, ‘this individual, whoever he may be, is doubtless one of the unbelieving, and therefore all promises or oaths made to him are null and void. Nay, for aught we know, he may be one of that accursed race of Eblis, so frequently denounced by our holy Prophet, and whom, as the known enemies of true Mussulmen, we are bound by our religion to persecute to the utmost of our ability. Do not give yourself, then, the trouble to perform so irksome a duty, but let one of your slaves undertake the *office in your stead.*’

“The king was irresolute at first, but at length he yielded to the arguments of his wuzeer, and, calling a trusty slave, he commanded him to carry the three bowls of milk to the appointed place. The slave went and returned, but reported that nothing extraordinary had happened.

“‘Said I not well, O king of the world?’ observed Ibn Fadel, with a self-complacent simper.

“The Sultan felt a pang of inward reproach as he thought over what had passed, but he determined not to give way to his feelings.

“‘I will go forth and make kaif,’ said he.

“A brilliant cortège was soon on horseback, and issuing from the portals of the palace. Shems-en-nahar, and the ladies of the court, followed in curtained carriages, drawn by oxen.

“The cavalcade proceeded to a delightful grove on the banks of the river, which intersected the capital city of the Sultan’s dominions. Here the Sultan and his male courtiers dismounted, and seated themselves on the grass, while Shems-en-nahar and her ladies proceeded farther on to some gardens which overlook the river, where, in a superb pavilion lined with diwans, they enjoyed their kaif, guarded by the zealous eunuchs of the harem from the profane gaze of any intruder.

“The Sultan grew more cheerful as the time flew on, and he quaffed goblet after goblet of Shiraz wine. When he first sat down, he thought he traced a strange-looking form lurking among the trees, and had even mentioned it to the wuzeer, but the latter, after a careful search, reported that no one could be found in the vicinity who was not of the court, and the monarch gave himself up to merriment.

“In the mean time, Shems-en-nahar and her ladies were reposing after their bath, while some of their slaves played and sang for their diversion. The music was disturbed by a knock at the door of the pavilion. A female slave opened it, and gave admittance to an aged woman of loathsome and repulsive aspect.

“‘I would speak with the Sultana Shems-en-nahar,’ said the old crone.

“‘What do you desire of me?’ said the lady, arising from her diwan.

“‘I must deliver my message to you alone,’ replied the new comer; ‘cause these to stand apart.’

“The ladies withdrew to another apartment of the pavilion,

leaving the old woman with the Suktana. The latter then turned an inquiring glance on her visitor.

"'Queen of the world,' said the crone, 'you must have noticed with surprise the strange change which has taken place lately in the king, your husband, but you will be much astonished and pained when you hear the cause. Know, then, that a daughter of the djin has fallen in love with him, and is beloved by him, while you are marked out as a sacrifice to her jealousy, unless you take measures to avert your doom. Happily, however, the remedy is in your own power. The djinee has given the Sultan a ring, which both attracts his affections and binds his destiny indissolubly with hers. If you can pluck off the ring from his finger, and throw it into yonder stream, the spell will be broken, and his love will be restored to you.'

"The ladies of Shems-en-nahar were alarmed by a loud scream, they returned to find their mistress alone, and lying in a fainting fit on the diwan. They applied the usual remedies, and sent one of the eunuchs to acquaint the Sultan with what had occurred.

"The king came hastily, for he dearly loved Shems-en-nahar, and felt deeply anxious on account of the tidings which he had received. She revived as soon as she heard his voice.

"'What aileth thee, O my eyes?' inquired the monarch.

"'Nothing, O my lord,' was the reply, 'but the weather is oppressive, and I am fatigued with bathing.'

"She took the hand which was graciously extended to her, and, while pressing it to her lips, affected for the first time to notice the ring.

"'What a beautiful diamond! may I examine it?' she asked.

"The Sultan, in his anxiety, had forgotten the caution of the dwarf, and he was desirous to do everything in his power to soothe his fair Sultana. He drew the ring from his finger, and placed it in her hand. She started up from the sofa with the bound of a gazelle, and, opening the window of the pavilion, cast the fatal gift into the river.

"'Now the spell is broken, and thou art wholly mine!' she exclaimed, as she threw herself into the Sultan's arms.

"The monarch stood for a moment mute with terror, as the consequences of the fatal act flashed across his mind; then,

uttering an imprecation on his own folly, he pushed her rudely from him, and rushed from the pavilion.

“When the unfortunate Sultan returned to his companions, he found them indulging in all the wild freaks of insanity, with goblets in their hands, which at once betrayed the cause of their conduct. They laughed, shouted, sang, and danced : respect was thrown entirely aside, and those who had shown in former times the most slavish deference to the monarch were now most forward in their familiarity. Plucking his beard with sorrow, the Sultan fled into the recesses of the neighboring wood, where he found Ibn Fadel, who had secured himself from the temptation of drinking water by imbibing a considerable quantity of wine.

“The king and his minister held a hasty consultation, the result of which was that they both determined to retire to the palace, and endeavor, by digging, to discover a spring on which the malediction of the dwarf would take no effect. They returned to the palace, and repairing to the gardens, they dug for some time, till at length they came to a spring, which they resolved should supply their present necessities, as the curse had power only over the rivers and cisterns, which existed at the time it was pronounced. They soon found, however, their condition most solitary and desolate, for every one had abandoned the palace. Once or twice they ventured abroad, but were driven back by the scoffs and jeers of the crowd, who shouted after them “There go the madmen.” They attempted to reason with their persecutors, but in vain, for all the insane were convinced that their prince and his wuzeer were mad. To such an extent did this opinion prevail that it was agreed among the citizens that a physician should make a visit to the two unfortunates in the palace. The man of medicine came ; he was distinguished by a long beard, and the gestures of a mountebank ; and the Sultan, in reply to his questions, bade him indignantly go home and heal himself.

“The physician’s report was, of course, unfavorable, and his remedy for the madness of his two patients would not have been unworthy of the Avicennas of a more civilized age. He ordered that the king and his wuzeer should suffer the daily infliction of fifty pails of water, and receive each a hundred stripes, till they acknowledged themselves to

be mad. At the end of three days, this regimen began to work wonders, and the king said to the wuzeer—

““O, Ibn Fadel, let us drink of the water of the river, and become even as the rest, for of what avail is our reason, if we are persecuted for being mad? My soles are sore from the bastinado, and my garments flow with water even as a fountain; yet the consciousness of my sanity will neither heal the one nor dry the other. Surely the poet has wisely said that, “if a wise man would dwell in peace among fools, he must also become foolish.””

“The wuzeer agreed fully with the sentiments of his sovereign; they both drank of the river, and the next day were received with acclamations by a grateful and frantic crowd.”*



CHAPTER XXI.

Tell-Nimroud. Monastery of Mar Behnam. Khoorsabad.

THE conclusion of the priest's story was a signal for the departure of our visitors, who seemed well satisfied with their entertainment. We now thought of retiring to rest, but it was no easy matter to parcel out the mud floor among four people. One found that when he had selected a place which seemed suitable, and had spread his coverlet upon it, a small hillock, which he never observed before, prevented his reclining with comfort. Another discovered that a pool of water occupied the greater part of his allotment, while a third gazed with gloomy forebodings on the suspicious appearance of the roof, which seemed likely to admit the rain during the night. At length we made our arrangements, and were fast sinking into the arms of Morpheus, when the storm of rain

* Part of the above story was related by my friend the priest at the time alluded to, but, as I heard it afterwards in a more complete form, I have given the reader the benefit of my after knowledge. My chief reason for inserting it is to furnish a specimen of the narratives which, even at the present day, are the delight of Orientals. This story recommended itself to my notice by its freedom from the gross indelicacy which is too commonly the characteristic of Eastern tales. Yet even in this some alterations have been found necessary.

and hail commenced anew. Our coverlets were soon flooded, and we determined to sit up for the remainder of the night in the dryest corner of the hut. To our great relief, morning dawned at last, and we prepared to resume our journey.

We rode along over a succession of small mounds, each containing, it may be, no inconsiderable portion of the relics of old Nineveh, until we reached a village of mud huts, about a mile and a half distant from the Tell, or mound of Nimroud. This village is situated near the apex of the delta, formed by the junction of the Tigris and the Zab, about twenty-five miles to the south of Mosul. From hence, after a slight rest, we proceeded to the Tell itself, which has since been the scene of Mr. Layard's discoveries.

Tell-Nimroud consists of an assemblage of mounds, the highest of which is of a pyramidal form. As we rambled over the grass-clad eminences, we discovered from time to time fragments of bricks inscribed with the cuneiform character. We talked of M. Botta's discoveries, and I remarked to our Russian companion, half in jest, the probability of finding some Assyrian relics in the mound over which we were walking.

"Let us try," said he, laughing, as he drew from its sheath his long sabre, and converted it into a temporary spade.

The infection of investigation seized us all. Swords and a spear or two, which we borrowed from some of the villagers, were put into requisition, and we were soon busily engaged in turning over the soil. A few bricks were the reward of our labors, but as we shortly became fatigued with such desultory work, we left off and returned to the village.

The sheikh, in whose house we had taken up our abode, inquired earnestly what treasure we had found, and was much disappointed when assured that we sought for nothing of the kind. He appeared half incredulous, and asserted with emphasis that Franks were too wise to travel all that distance to look for old stones.

The Tell of Nimroud and its lately discovered treasures have excited so much interest that I trust I may be pardoned if I interrupt the course of the narrative to bestow a few remarks on the identity of this site with that of the ancient city of Rehoboth, mentioned in Genesis, x. 11.*

* "Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh and the city Rehoboth and Calah."

It is evident from the sculptures which have been discovered at Nimroud, that these mounds were in ancient days occupied by some large Assyrian city. Major Rawlinson, in his interesting paper on Assyrian Antiquities, quoted in the *Athenæum* of January 26, 1850, assumes that the ruins of Nimroud represent the old city of Calah, or Halah, while he places Nineveh at Nebbi Yunas. Yet it appears likely that the ancient Calah, or Halah, which was probably the capital of the district of Calachene, must have been nearer to the Kurdish Mountains. Ptolemy mentions the province of Calachene as bounded on the north by the Mountains of Armenia, and on the south by the district of Adiabene.* Most writers place Ninus, or Nineveh, within the latter province. But if so, Adiabene would include also Nimroud, and, therefore, it is not probable that Halah, or Calah, could have occupied the site indicated by Major Rawlinson. Saint Ephraim, himself a learned Syrian and well acquainted with the history and geography of the East, considers Calah to be the modern Hatareh, a large town inhabited chiefly by Yezidees, and situated N. N. W. of Nineveh.† Between Hatareh and the site of Nineveh, we find a village bearing the name of Ras el Ain, which is evidently a corrupted form of the Resen of Genesis. It is worthy of remark that this theory confirms the statement made in Genesis x. 12, where Resen is represented as occupying a midway position between Calah and Nineveh. But assuming Major Rawlinson's hypothesis to be correct, it is clear that there would be no room for a large city between Nebbi Yunas and Nimroud, a distance of, at most, twenty-five miles.

Nor is it certain that the latter may be considered as the site of the Larissa of Xenophon. A considerable interval must have taken place between the passage of the river Zab by the Ten Thousand, and their arrival at the Tigris. It is expressly mentioned that they forded a mountain stream, which seems to have been of some width, soon after they

* Ptolemy, lib. vi. cap. i.

† Strabo, lib. 16, mentions the plain in the vicinity of Nineveh, and seems to consider it as not belonging to the province of Adiabene. But his testimony, if taken, would also exclude that city, and the land to the southward of it, from the district of Calachene, as he enumerates that as a distinct part of Assyria immediately afterwards. In the arrangement of the dioceses recorded in Assemani, tom. iii., Athoor and Adiabene seem to be continually connected, while Calachene is spoken of as nearer the mountains.

had passed over the Zab. But no vestige of any stream of this kind appears between Nimroud and the Tigris. It is probable, therefore, that the *Χαραδρα* of Xenophon was the Hazir or Bumadas, after passing which, the Ten Thousand marched in a north-westerly direction, past the modern village of Kermalis to the Tigris. At a short distance from the latter, they encountered a ruined city, which Xenophon terms Larissa, and which occupied, probably, the site of the modern Ras el Ain. The village known by this name is about twelve miles from the Tigris, but the ancient city may have been much nearer.*

Both Ptolemy and Ammianus Marcellinus mention a city situated at the mouth of the Zab, on precisely the same site as that occupied by the mounds of Nimroud, which they term BIRTHA, or VIRTHA. But BIRTHA, or BRITHA, in Chaldee, signifies the same as Rehoboth in Hebrew, namely, wide squares or streets, an identity in name, which seems to imply also an identity in locality. It appears likely, therefore, that Nimroud is the same as Rehoboth, which, it is said, Asshur founded after his departure from the land of Shinar.

On leaving Tell-Nimroud, we directed our course eastward, towards the village of El Khudder, in order to visit the ruined monastery of Mar Behnam. We arrived there in about three hours and a half, and found only a few mud huts situated near the convent. It had formerly belonged to the Syrian Jacobites, but, from want of funds, they had been obliged to abandon it. The church and the dwellings of the monks were still in a very perfect condition.

Near the monastery was the tomb of Mar Behnam, situated in a subterranean chapel, covered by a dome, which rises, as it were, out of the ground, and resembles, at a distance, a hillock or mound. We descended by a flight of stone steps, but the passage was so dark that we required the aid of torches to find our way. The chapel below was circular in form, and was lighted by lamps of silver, suspended from the roof. In the wall were several recesses, containing the sarcophagi of Mar Behnam, and several other saints who lived about his time. On each tomb was an inscription in Syriac, stating the name, age, and station of the occupant.

The odor of the incense, which was daily burnt in this

* Xenophon Anab., lib. iii. cap. iv.

chamber of the dead, served to relieve the close atmosphere of the vault. We were informed that numbers of pilgrims made an annual visit to the tomb, and took away with them portions of the dust of the place, which is esteemed a specific for all kinds of diseases.

Mar Behnam was a Persian by birth, and his sepulchre is mentioned by John of Mardin as having been, in his day, famous for the miracles performed there. The people of the village gave us, during our stay, the following account of him:—

In the reign of Shapoor the Cruel, King of Persia, the chief of the Magi had a son, whose name was Behnam. This youth was beautiful in his person, and famed for pre-eminence in all active exercises. Shapoor himself distinguished him by special notice, and all things seemed to predict a favorable destiny to one who was so generally beloved and admired.

During the reign of Shapoor, the Christians met with bitter persecution, and numbers of them were daily led to execution. Among the unhappy victims was a young female slave, who had been brought up in the family of the chief of the Magi, and had been specially attached to the service of his daughter, the sister of Behnam. Before they led the young girl to the place of execution, she desired earnestly one last interview with her mistress. The daughter of the chief Magus remained several hours in her company, and when she returned to her father's house, she avowed to her surprised and indignant parent that she had been induced to embrace the Christian faith, and was, indeed, a baptized member of the Christian Church.

Unwilling to behold his daughter dragged to prison, the chief of the Magi confined her in one of the chambers of his house, and directed her brother to visit and argue with her on the folly and guilt of abandoning the religion of her ancestors. But the young Christian defended her new creed with such ability and zeal that Behnam was himself overcome, and, after a vain attempt to stifle his convictions, he sought and obtained baptism at the hands of Mar Symeon, the Christian bishop.

Shapoor grew daily more and more inveterate against the Nazarene. Hundreds suffered martyrdom rather than renounce their faith, nor could age, rank, or station, protect

any from the tyrant's rage. At length, Behnam was informed that his secret had been discovered and betrayed. He had not as yet made a public profession of Christianity, and the absence of his father, who had been obliged to quit home for several months, had hitherto prevented his non-attendance on the Magian rites from being observed.

On hearing that his change of religion was discovered, he determined to fly from Persia, and to take up his abode among the inaccessible mountains of Kurdistan. Accompanied by his sister, he quitted the land of his birth, and found a residence in a cave situated near the summit of one of the Assyrian mountains. From this place, he descended into the plains of Nineveh, and taught the faith of Christ to the peasants of Athoor. But his zeal and success awakened the animosity of the Magian priests, who seized upon Mar Behnam and his sister, and put them to a cruel and lingering death.

At the village of El Khudder our party broke up. My Russian friend and I pursued our journey to the convent of St. Matthew, while B—— and Kas Botros returned to Mosul.

From Mar Matti we went on to Shiekh Adi and Rabban Hormuzd. After passing a few hours in Alkosh, we returned to Khoorsabad, where we took up our quarters in the house which M. Botta had erected near the excavations. The workmen had made great progress since my last visit, and several chambers had been discovered connected by galleries or passages, through which we wandered, and contemplated at our ease the wonderful relics of ancient Assyria.

On entering the excavations, we found ourselves in the middle of a hall, which probably formed the reception-room of the palace. Part of the left wall was in a very perfect state. On the first tablet was portrayed a siege; two kneeling figures, with bent bows, were shooting at the defenders. The same subject was continued in the second slab: two kneeling archers, clad in mail, were discharging arrows against the defenders of the fortress, who appeared on the ramparts. One of the latter was hurling a missile over the heads of the other two, who were bending their bows to repel the assault. On the right wall of the apartment the figures were much defaced, but I traced the outline of a chariot with horses. The trappings of the steeds seem to have been of a most costly description, and were well

executed. A neck ornament, which resembled in form a tassel, had each thread distinctly marked. In front of the chariot was a quiver with arrows.

From the hall, we entered a passage or gallery, which had formerly been adorned with sculptures, the remains of which were adhering to the earth. To the right of this gallery, we entered a second apartment, containing three figures in long robes, the borders of which were adorned with rich fringes. Returning to the gallery, we explored it to the farthest extremity, and arrived at the entrance to another large apartment, on each side of which were two quadruped sphinxes, with large wings. On one of these I observed a long cuneiform inscription. To the right of the entrance was the figure of a man with the head of an eagle or hawk, which has since been supposed to represent the god Assarac or Nisroch. The sphinxes were in an excellent state of preservation, and bore the marks of coloring.

Returning towards the entrance hall, we explored a passage to our right, the first two tablets in which were covered with inscriptions. We found here a group of captives with chains round their ankles, kneeling before a figure in royal robes. Behind these was another company of prisoners erect and in chains. The upper part of the tablet was defaced, so that all the figures were headless. I thought, as I gazed upon them, that they might have represented the captives led away by Sennacherib from Syria and Palestine. Major Rawlinson supposes that a monarch named Sargon was the founder of Khoorsabad, and this appellation is found in Isaiah, and is thought to have been applied to Sennacherib.*

Passing onwards, we entered another large chamber, on the left hand wall of which were two warriors on horseback. To the right we found a tablet representing two horsemen with lances, preceding a chariot, in which were two figures, but the whole was very much defaced. In a passage to the right of the chamber was the figure of a warrior in a chariot, the two horses of which were led by attendants. Above this group were several inscriptions. Along this gallery, the earth on each side was largely mingled with fragments of stone.

We returned to the large apartment, and proceeded along

* Isaiah xx. i.

the left hand gallery, where we found nothing except earth, and pieces of the broken tablets which had adhered to it. We retraced our steps and came to another gallery leading off to the left. In this we saw several defaced figures in long robes, with inscriptions above, and in some cases underneath, the groups. A little farther on, we found three figures in long robes, a warrior in a chariot, with slaves leading the horses, and a great number of inscriptions. We had now reached the extremity of the excavation, and were obliged to return.

With his usual kindness and liberal feeling, M. Botta had permitted my Russian friend to take copies of the inscriptions, and we set to work damping large sheets of brown paper, which we pasted as it were on the tablets, pressing them down as much as possible, and then allowing them to dry. By this means we succeeded in obtaining impressions of nearly all the inscriptions; after which we returned to M. Botta's temporary house, where we found every accommodation had been provided for us.

The use of the cuneiform character seems to have been common to the ancient Assyrians, Chaldeans, and Persians. It was in these letters that the Babylonian sages recorded their astronomical observations, and the Assyrian monarchs their triumphs and warlike exploits. Herodotus mentions two columns set up by Darius at the entrance of the Bosphorus, on one of which was recorded in Greek, and on the other in Assyrian characters, the names of all the nations who served in his expedition. These pillars were carried off by the Byzantines, who, after the usual Greek manner, despised the monuments of barbarians, and used the stone for building an altar to Diana. One of the tablets was left near the temple of Bacchus, a short distance from Byzantium.* It is probable that these Assyrian letters were the cuneiform characters, since we find them used by the ancient Persians at Persepolis. After the Macedonian conquest, the Greek language and characters displaced the wedge-formed writing, and even the sages of Chaldea, if we may judge from the example of Berosus, found it necessary to study and to use the dialect of their rulers.

M. Botta met with much opposition in the course of his

* Herod. lib. iv. cap. 87.

researches. Mohammed Pasha showed himself decidedly hostile to his undertaking, and while he received him with smiles and good wishes, he sent private intelligence to Constantinople, that the French consul was building a fort. The cadi and mufti of Mosul were not slow in aiding and abetting any project that might irritate and annoy the misbelievers. They stirred up the people of Khoorsabad to remonstrate, and these poor peasants, who would gladly have sold the whole of their miserable huts twenty times over, were made to utter fine sounding and pathetic appeals against the wicked Frank who was undermining their mud cabins.

Fortunately, however, for M. Botta, he obtained all the support and assistance which his government could afford him. When the success of his excavations was communicated to the Académie Française by M. Mohl, that learned body applied at once to the minister of Public Instruction, and obtained for M. Botta the grant of ample funds to meet all necessary expenses, together with the valuable aid of an artist, M. Flandin, who was directed to proceed to Mosul, and take sketches of such sculptures and inscriptions as seemed unlikely to bear removal.

Most heartily do I wish that it was in my power to commend a similar act of liberality on the part of the British government towards Mr. Layard; but this active and enterprising traveler, after having made discoveries double the value of those at Khoorsabad, has been left to experience the same coldness and neglect which have rewarded every English discoverer since the days of Belzoni. With the exception of Sir Stratford Canning, whose liberality and good feeling on this and other occasions cannot be too highly praised, I have heard of no English official who seems to have taken the slightest interest in the labors by which Mr. Layard has enriched our national museum.

CHAPTER XXII.

Remarks on Assyrian History.

THE early history of the Assyrian empire seems involved in great obscurity, while even with regard to the later period

of its existence, few writers agree among themselves. The history of Ctesias bears evident marks of falsehood, although it is probable that all he relates is not entirely void of foundation. Herodotus is a safer guide, but the particulars which he furnishes are necessarily few, as he seems to have compiled a separate history of the Assyrians, which has unfortunately been lost. In making a few remarks, therefore, on the foundation of Nineveh, and other matters connected with the rise and decline of that great nation of which it was the capital, I must be considered as one who is groping his way through a region full of darkness and obscurity, and is often in danger of mistaking shadows for realities.

The etymology of the name Nineveh seems, in some degree, to indicate its vicinity to the mountains of Armenia, on which the ark rested after the deluge. The first syllable, *nin*, or *nun*, implies, in the Semitic languages, any floating substance, and was, for that reason, used afterwards to signify a fish. The suffix, *neveh*, or *nooh*, has generally the signification of a resting-place or habitation, whence we may consider the name Nineveh as indicating the rest of the floating vessel or of the ark. It is likely that the sons of Noah would erect some memorial of their escape on their descent into the plains; and Asshur, who completed, or perhaps founded Nineveh, could hardly select a more appropriate title for his new city. The attempt to identify Ninus with Nimrod must do violence to all chronology, even if we admitted the plea urged by some—that Nimrod founded Nineveh, and that its appellation was taken from his Assyrian name, *Nin* or *Nun*.

It must not be concealed, indeed, that some have read Genesis x. 11, as if it referred to the going forth of Nimrod into the land of Asshur. Jonathan Ben Uzziel, in his Targum, renders the verse thus: "And Nimrod having gone out from that land, reigned in Assyria because he was unwilling to join himself with the builders of the tower (of Babel) and to agree with them; wherefore God prospered him, and in the place of the four cities which he had left, he gave him four other ones, namely, Nineveh, Resen, Rehoboth, and Calah."*

Yet it seems more probable to imagine that Asshur, from

* Targum on Genesis, c. x.

whom the region called afterwards Athoor or Assyria evidently takes its name, was the person who founded this city, more especially as he lived a generation earlier than Nimrod; the beginning or capital of whose kingdom was Babel. And here it may be worthy of inquiry whether the Babel of Genesis is the same city, or occupies the same locality with the Babylon of a later period. The similarity of the names will not prove an identity of position, since we know that there existed a Babel or Babylon in Egypt. It would certainly seem more natural that the descendants of Noah should have settled themselves near to the mountains on which the ark rested, than that they should have emigrated three hundred miles through arid and desolate plains, to the site of the later Babylon. Admitting the identity of the plain of Shinar with that of Sinjar, the northern position of which seems to be established by the Karnak Tablet,* we may fairly infer that the Babel of Genesis occupied a position farther north than that region which was afterwards known by the name of Chaldea.

In the course of a journey from Nisibis to Jezirah, I passed a small village not far from the latter, which still bears the name of Babel. It stands in the plain which extends to the south of Nisibis, and to which the Arabian geographers apply the title of Sinjar. Within a day's journey from the mountains, it is not improbable that the sons of Noah might have pitched their tents on this fertile plain, where their descendants afterwards built a city on which was conferred subsequently the appropriate title of Babel, or confusion. The early emigrants from the plain of Shinar, who colonized Egypt, carried with them the recollection of the cause of their exile, and erected in their new country another Babel which might recall the memory of Shinar.

The Babel of a later period seems to have been founded by Semiramis;† nor does this view appear at all repugnant to the testimony of Scripture. In Isaiah xxiii. 13, it is said, "Behold the land of the Chaldeans; this people was not, till the Assyrian founded it for them that dwelt in the wilder-

* Saenkara or Shinar is placed next to the Ruten or Cappadocians among the conquests of Sethos I. They are all described as Northern nations, an expression which would hardly apply to a territory south of Mosul.

† Philo Byzantius apud Leo Allat. de Septem Mirac. Orb. cap. v. p. 110. Quintus Curtius, liv. v. i. Ammian. Marcellin. xxiii. 6. Diod. Sic. ii. 7.

ness: they set up the towers thereof, they raised up the palaces thereof." This passage must refer to the foundation of a city, nor do we know any city of the Chaldeans which more fully answers to the above description than the later Babel or Babylon.

Nor does it seem probable, from the words of Scripture, that the Babel mentioned in Genesis survived for any length of time the confusion of languages and the dispersion of mankind. It is expressly stated that they left off to build the city,* while all traditions agree in affirming that the first Babel was destroyed by a storm. In no place do we read of Babel as a kingdom until the time of Hezekiah. A king of Shinar is mentioned Gen. xiv. 1; while in the Karnak Tablet, references are perpetually made to kings or chiefs of Saenkara (Shinar), but the name of Babel does not occur. It appears likely, then, that the Babel of Genesis was either destroyed or left unfinished soon after the dispersion, and that the plains of Sinjar and of Nineveh, with perhaps all the northern parts of Mesopotamia, were included in the kingdom of Shinar, which formed the germ of the Assyrian empire. It is probable that Nimrod succeeded Asshur in the government of this kingdom, and greatly extended its boundaries. He may be considered as the founder of the first dynasty of the Assyrian kings, and was probably afterwards deified under the title of Nisroch, which signifies not only an eagle, but a hawk, a bird which, being used in the chase, typified the ruling passion of the "mighty hunter."

An interval of 1098 years seems to have intervened between the foundation of Nineveh and the first rise of the Assyrian empire to the dominion of Upper Asia, which is mentioned by Herodotus.† According to the common chronology, the building of Nineveh is placed in B. C. 2304. The period during which the Assyrian empire exercised a supreme influence over Asia, embraced, according to Herodotus, five hundred and twenty years, while the duration of the Median rule, commencing at the destruction of Nineveh, and enduring till the time of Cyrus, is reckoned by the same authority at one hundred and fifty years.‡ The first year of Cyrus is computed to be B. C. 536, to which we must add the united periods of the Assyrian and Median sway. These

* Gen. xi. 8.

† Herod. lib. i. cap. 95.

‡ Ibid.

amount to six hundred and seventy years, which, if added to the era of Cyrus, bring the first rise of the Assyrian power to B. C. 1206, a period which synchronizes as nearly as possible with the statement of Major Rawlinson, which places the sudden aggrandizement of the Assyrian empire in the twelfth or thirteenth century before the Christian era.

The Assyrian kings mentioned in Scripture are five in number, and they all flourished at the close of the period mentioned by Herodotus. Their names and the dates when they began to reign are as follows:—

Pul, B. C. 771.

Tiglath Pileser, B. C. 747.

Shalmaneser, B. C. 728.

Sennacherib, B. C. 714.

Esarhaddon, B. C. 710.

Of these monarchs, it is probable that the former, Pul, was the same as the Asser adanpul, or Sardanapalus the First, mentioned by Major Rawlinson as distinguished from Sardanapalus the Second, or Esarhaddon, the last king of Nineveh mentioned in Scripture. Asser Adan Pul is described in the inscriptions as the builder of the N. W. palace at Nimroud, and the ruler over many districts in Syria, Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Armenia, the country between the two Zabs, and the lower regions near the Persian Gulf. The gods whom he worshiped, Assarac, Beltis, Ani, and Dagon, are then alluded to, and Major Rawlinson seems disposed to identify Assarac with the Nisroch of Scripture. We find from the inscriptions on some votive bulls and lions, that Sardanapalus soon after passed the great desert into Syria, and received the tribute of Tyre and Sidon, of Akarra (Acre), of Gubul, and of Arvad. All this corresponds remarkably with the acts of Pul, as recorded in 2 Kings. He is the first Assyrian king mentioned in Scripture, and he seems to have invaded Syria and Phœnicia, and to have subdued the northern parts of Palestine: Menahem, King of Israel, paid him tribute, after which he returned to his own dominions.

This Pul, Pal, or Sardanapalus the First, seems to have been the Bel or Belus of the Babylonians; the letters P. and B. being frequently interchanged in Semitic languages. To this Belus many persons in the time of Quintus Curtius

ascribed the building of Babylon.* His name is thus brought in contact with that of Semiramis, who is mentioned by other writers as the foundress of that city. It seems likely that Pul was the Ninus of the Greeks, the more especially as Herodotus, the only trustworthy historian of these matters, places but five generations between Nitocris, the queen of Nebuchadnezzar, and Semiramis. But Nebuchadnezzar was the son of Baladan, the first king of Babylon, who attained that dignity by conspiring with Arbaces the Mede against Asser adanpal, Sardanapalus II., or Esarhaddon, as he is termed in Scripture.† From Nebuchadnezzar, therefore, to the period of Pul, were exactly five generations, namely, Baladan, Esarhaddon, Sennacherib, Shalmaneser, and Tiglath Pileser. The assertions of Herodotus are peculiarly entitled to respect, as he is supposed to have written a history of Assyria, and to have derived his information exclusively from Chaldean sources. The simplicity of that venerable and veracious historian placed him far above the conceited ignorance of many of his countrymen, who affected to despise the records of barbarians, even when they were writing their history. As for Ctesias, his propensity for fiction was so well known that not even his cotemporaries could trust him.

It seems likely that Pul commenced the erection of a city in the province of Babylonia, of which he left the completion to his wife Semiramis. After his death he was worshiped under the name of Bel, a very different divinity from the Baal of the Ammonites and Western Syria, and with whom the chief of the Babylonian Pantheon must not be confounded.

The new city was peopled by the Chasdim, or Chaldeans, wandering tribes who had hitherto inhabited the northern

* Quint. Curt., lib. 5. In his description of Babylon, he mentions that a king of Syria constructed the hanging gardens for the use of his wife. If for Syria we read Assyria, two names often confounded, this assertion may support the hypothesis advocated above.

† "Asser adanpal" and "Esarhaddon" are too much alike to need any attempt at identification. The similarity of the names shows that the Greek Sardanapalus, whom all profane historians agree was the last king of Assyria, and the Esarhaddon of Scripture, are one and the same person. Shortly after the accession of the latter is mentioned, we read of Merodach Baladan, King of Babylon, the Belesis of profane history. The conjectures of Prideaux and others, who have considered Tiglath Pileser to be the same person as Arbaces the Mede, seem unnatural, and destitute of any solid foundation.

parts of Arabia, and the plains of Mesopotamia. They seem to have possessed, however, several cities in the land of Naharaim, as Ur is named after them in Genesis, and probably Haran was inhabited by a people of the same race. Yet there appears strong reason to believe that the majority of the Chasdim retained the nomadic habits of their forefathers, until the building of Babylon.

Major Rawlinson alludes also to Temen-bar the Second, who appears to have reigned after Sardanapalus the First. The annals of this monarch's reign are engraved on the black obelisk now in the British Museum, upon the two large bulls in the centre palace of Nimroud, and on the sitting figure discovered at Kalah Shergat.

After the mention of the Assyrian gods, Assarac, Ani, Nit, Artank, Beltis, Shemir, and Bar, the monarch proceeds to describe his conquests. He crossed the Euphrates, and subdued great portions of Syria proper and Asia Minor. In the ninth year of his reign, he leads an expedition southward to Babylonia, his design being probably to carry on the building of Babylon, which was certainly not finished till the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. He marches also to the eastward against the Arii, the Persians, and the Medes; and, on two other occasions, sends his general, Tetarasser, to wage war on the same nations. Herodotus informs us that the Medes were called anciently Arii, and that they derived their other appellation from Medea, the celebrated Princess of Colchis.*

From the terms in which he describes their contests with the Assyrians, it would seem that they revolted from the latter towards the close of their Asiatic supremacy; after which, other nations following their example, the Assyrian empire was weakened and finally destroyed. There seems, therefore, no improbability in ascribing to Tiglath Pileser the Median conquests of Temen-bar. The name of the general, Tetarasser, may be the same as that of Tartan, alluded to in Isaiah xx. 1, as an officer of Sargon, King of Assyria. Sargon is mentioned by Major Rawlinson as the appellation of the monarch who built Khoorsabad. If the latter is identical with the Sargon of Isaiah, he is probably the same as Sennacherib.

Upon the whole, I see little reason for supposing that any

* Herod, Lib. i. 101.

of the sculptures or inscriptions lately discovered, are more than a century older than the reign of Pul or Sardanapalus the First. Nor am I disposed to agree with Major Rawlinson that these memorials are wholly unconnected with the later Assyrian sovereigns mentioned in Scripture. I have read carefully the report of his paper in the "Athenæum," but I have not been able to discover any single argument to prove that any one of the inscriptions or sculptures are older than the period alluded to. If they are, we must be driven to the alternative of supposing that the Assyrian monarchs invaded Syria and the Holy Land before the time of Pul, a fact which is utterly irreconcilable with Scripture history.

The last of the Assyrian kings was Sardanapalus II., the Esarhaddon of the Bible. He seems to have been a prince of effeminate and vicious habits, if we may trust the report of Ctesias. In the midst of his concubines, the successor of Semiramis devoted himself to the study of female arts and accomplishments. He excelled in spinning and the mysteries of the toilet, and joined to his unmanly affectation of female manners the grossest and most disgusting vices. An inscription, composed by himself, and inscribed, it is said, on the gates of his sepulchre, betrays the low sensuality of an ignoble mind.

On one occasion the Median satrap, Arbaces, was admitted on important business to the presence of his sovereign. He encountered a being whose habits and demeanor appeared those of one who could scarcely be called a man. With painted cheeks, and lisping accents, the monarch treated the grave affairs of state as of less importance than the proper management of a spindle, and the indignant satrap withdrew in anger and contempt from the presence of one whom he felt himself degraded in serving. He communicated his discontent and his hopes to Baladan, who then ruled the province of the Chasdim and the rising city of Babylon. The two satraps combined their forces and besieged Nineveh, where Esarhaddon was indulging his passions and his vices in voluptuous security. He found himself deserted by his allies, and, after some vain attempts to repulse the rebels, he constructed a large and spacious pile, on which, surrounded by his wives and concubines, the last King of Assyria met his death amid the flames which his own hand had kindled.*

* Diod. Siculus, lib. xi. 23.

It does not seem, however, that the destruction of Nineveh followed the taking of the city by the Chaldeans and the Medes. The two satraps shared the dominions of the kingdom between them; Arbaces taking the northern provinces, while Baladan seized upon the southern territory of the Assyrian empire. Arbaces, himself a native of Media, seems to have removed the seat of government to Ecbatana, leaving the city of the Assyrian monarchs to fall into gradual decay.

Arbaces, who may be considered the same as the Deioeces of Herodotus, appears to have confined his conquests to the northern parts of Persia and Mesopotamia. A war with the Cadusii, or Kurds, is mentioned by Otesias; and it is probable that some time after the death of Sardanapalus the mountaineers allied themselves to the inhabitants of Nineveh, and withdrew from the Median rule. Phraortes, the son of Deioeces, is said by Herodotus to have marched against Nineveh, during the siege of which he perished. After his death, Cyaxares, his son and successor, waged war against the Lydians, and subdued the whole of Asia beyond the Halys. He also besieged Nineveh, being desirous of destroying so powerful a city, and of avenging his father's death. He was compelled, however, to raise the siege on account of the incursions of the Scythians, who seem to have pursued him into Media.

After the Scythian war, it is probable that Cyaxares again laid siege to Nineveh, and utterly destroyed this once flourishing metropolis of the Assyrian kings. The Median power continued to increase till it was finally absorbed in that of Persia, the monarchs of which latter country soon became paramount in Asia.

The decay of Nineveh must have been very rapid, since, in the time of the younger Cyrus, Xenophon seems to have passed close by its site, yet not even the name of the once mighty city appears to have survived its downfall. He only mentions a ruined town called Mespila, which probably the Medes had erected in the neighborhood. Yet, according to Tacitus, Ninus or Nineveh was a city worthy of being captured even in the days of Claudius.

After the death of Alexander, and the division of his Asiatic dominions, Athoor, or the region of Nineveh, seems to have remained under the dominion of the Seleucidæ until

the establishment of the Parthian empire. The kings of Parthia, or rather their lieutenants, maintained their ground in Assyria, with varied success, till the foundation of the kingdom of Adiabene, which dates its commencement from the Mithradatic wars. Plutarch, in his life of Lucullus, mentions a king of Adiabene who allied himself with Tigranes against the Romans. His dominions seem to have comprised the whole of Assyria proper, which was bounded on the north by the Gordian or Kurdish mountains, on the west by the Tigris, and on the east and south by the lower Zab.

One of the successors of this king, whose name was Monobazus, was the father of several sons by his wife Helena, but he set his affections chiefly on the youngest, Izates, a partiality which excited the jealousy of the others. Fearing that their envy would work some evil to his favorite, the king sent him, with many presents, to Abennerig, the king or chief of Charax Spasini, who gladly received and protected him, and finally gave him his daughter, Samacha, in marriage. A short time before his death, the King of Adiabene sent for his son, and bestowed upon him a province called Cæron, or Carræ, where it is said the remains of the ark were still at that time preserved. In this country, Izates continued in peace till his father's death, when, by the unanimous voice of the nobles of Adiabene, he was proclaimed king.

While Izates resided at the court of Abennerig he was converted to the Jewish religion, which soon after his mother, Helena, also embraced, and became remarkable for her zeal and devotion. She had no sooner seen her son quietly established in his kingdom than she determined to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and to take up her abode there.

When she arrived at the Holy City, she found that a great famine prevailed in the country of Judea, which is, indeed, supposed to be the scarcity predicted by Agabus in Acts xi. 28. The queen immediately sent to Alexandria and to Cyprus to purchase great quantities of provisions, which, when they arrived at Jerusalem, she distributed among all those who needed assistance. Izates also dispatched large sums of money to the chief men among the Jews about the same time.

The sincerity of the king's religious views was shown by one of his first actions after his accession to the throne of

Adiabene. At the death of his father, Monobazus, the children of the deceased monarch had been placed in confinement, according to the usual Parthian and Persian custom. Izates not only released them, but expressed his deep sorrow that they had been subjected to this treatment, for which he endeavored to atone by the consideration with which he afterwards behaved towards them.

During the early part of the reign of Izates, Artabanus, King of Parthia, finding that his nobles had conspired against him, left Ctesiphon, and took refuge in the territory of Adiabene. This proud monarch, who styled himself in all his epistles the King of Kings, advanced to meet Izates with the air of a suppliant. Dismounting from his horse, he made a low obeisance, and entreated in the humblest terms protection and support as from a brother monarch. The generous Adiabenean was no sooner aware of the quality and misfortunes of his guest than he leaped from his horse, which he compelled the royal exile to mount, while he himself escorted him on foot to his palace. During his stay in Adiabene, Artabanus was treated with all the consideration which his rank demanded; the upper place at festivals was conceded to him, and all the sympathy which a generous mind could exhibit to depressed and fallen royalty was freely bestowed.

Nor did Izates neglect to employ more active measures in behalf of his friend and ally. By his mediation the Parthians were induced again to receive their sovereign, and the grateful Artabanus soon departed for his own kingdom, having conferred on his host and benefactor the most substantial tokens of his regard. The King of Adiabene received the permission of the Parthian monarch to wear his tiara upright, and to sleep on a golden bed, while the rich province of Nisibis was bestowed upon him to furnish the means of supporting his new dignities.

After the death of Artabanus, the kingdom of the Parthians became a prey to intestine troubles. Gotarzes, the son of the late king, seized upon the throne, but met with a warm opposition from his brother, Bardanes, who at length succeeded in inducing him to give up his claims to the crown and to retire into Hyrcania. He soon, however, repented of his act, and raised forces, with which he marched against Bardanes, but was defeated, and obliged to fly.

Elated with his victory, Bardanes behaved himself with such haughtiness and cruelty to his subjects that they conspired against him, and he was assassinated during a hunting expedition. He had previously denounced war against Izates, being provoked that he would not join him in an intended expedition against the Romans.

Gotarzes now mounted the Parthian throne, but he becoming in his turn obnoxious to his subjects, some of them called in Meherdates, the grandson of a former King Phraates, who had been dispatched as an hostage to Rome. The Parthian ambassadors appeared before the Senate, and in a pathetic oration deplored the miseries of their country, devastated by civil contests, and the extinction of the line of their ancient kings.

The Senate was pleased to grant Meherdates to their prayers, being doubtless by no means unwilling to excite or continue dissensions which prevented the Parthians from turning their arms against the Roman dominions in the East. In a long oration, the Emperor Claudius addressed the ambassadors and the Parthian prince, who was himself present in the august assembly, inculcating on the latter the necessity of ruling his dominions with moderation and justice, while he warned the former of the danger of frequent changes, and insinuated the policy of sometimes complying with the humors of their kings. He concluded by remarking that the Romans, satiated with military glory, desired nothing more than to see universal peace pervading all foreign nations. Caius Cassius, the Governor of Syria, was charged to escort the young prince as far as the banks of the Euphrates, which office he fulfilled satisfactorily, and dismissed him with just and reasonable counsels, which, however, Meherdates did not afterwards follow.

This aspirant to the Parthian throne having wasted both time and opportunity by unseasonable delays, at length crossed the Tigris, and marched through the territory of Adiabene. Izates had openly professed himself in his favor, though he seems to have carried on, at the same time, a secret correspondence with Gotarzes. It appears, however, that the forces of Meherdates captured the city of Ninus, which still seems to have been large enough to be occupied as a military post.*

* Tacit. Annal., lib. xii. Josephus Antiq., lib. xx.

Izates and Akbar, King of the Arabians,* soon deserted the cause of the Parthian pretender, who shortly after was defeated in battle by Gotarzes, who spared his life, but commanded that his ears should be cut off.

The success which had attended the affairs of Izates, and the virtues which distinguished him, produced a favorable effect on his brother Monobazus, and his other kindred. Ascribing his good fortune to the religion which he professed, they determined also to become proselytes to the Jewish faith. But this intention of theirs having greatly displeased the great men of the country, the latter formed a league against them, and endeavored to enlist in their cause Abia, King of the Arabians, who, for the sake of a large bribe that had been promised him, marched against Izates.

The King of Adiabene prepared to repel the invaders, but soon discovered the domestic treason of some of his nobles, who had agreed that during the conflict they would take to flight, and thus throw into disorder the ranks of Izates. These traitors having met with the punishment they deserved, their sovereign marched against the Arabians, whom he defeated with great slaughter; after which Abia, fearing to fall into the hands of the enemy, fell upon his own sword, and expired in the fortress of Arsum, where he had taken refuge after the battle.

But the nobles of Adiabene still maintaining their aversion to the royal family, dispatched messengers to solicit the aid of the Parthian king, Volagases, the grandson of Gotarzes. The ambassadors complained that their sovereign had departed from the laws and customs of his forefathers, and was endeavoring to introduce Jewish customs. It is not improbable that Izates had become a Christian, as about this time the Gospel was promulgated with great success in Mesopotamia, by St. Thomas, St. Bartholomew, and Adæus. The Jewish religion was not a creed that sought to obtain converts among the heathen, nor, indeed, did it provoke that hostility which we find, was always excited by the preaching of Christianity. On the other hand, the first teachers of the Gospel used every effort to extend the empire of the Church, nor is it unlikely that their active zeal would produce feelings of the most bitter hostility among people who adhered with superstitious firmness to the tenets of their fathers.

* This prince was probably the Agbarus of ecclesiastical history.

The King of Parthia lent a favorable ear to the complaints of the malcontents of Adiabene, and after sending an embassy to Izates to demand back those privileges which Artabanus had bestowed, he determined, in the event of a refusal, to make it the pretext for war. The King of Adiabene, who had penetrated the designs of the Parthian, not only refused to accede to his demand, but prepared immediately for an invasion. He placed his family in a strong fortress, and having well garrisoned the citadels of his dominions, he awaited the advance of the Parthians.

Volagases, in the mean time, had pitched his tents on the banks of a river which separated Adiabene from Media. He dispatched an ambassador to Izates, who was charged with a message that breathed all the lofty arrogance of the Parthian kings. The envoy dwelt upon the greatness of his master, and the magnitude of his dominions, which extended from the river Euphrates, even to Bactria, while with an impious boldness he insulted the religion professed by Izates, and declared almost in the language of Rab Shakeh, the inability of the God of Israel to oppose the power of the great king.

The reply of Izates to these menaces was calm and dignified. While he acknowledged the extent of territory which was subject to the Parthian monarch, the valor of his nation, and the multitude of his troops, he reminded the messenger that the power of God was greater than that of man, and professed his determination to await with hope and confidence the decision of Heaven.

The envoy of Volagases took his departure, and Izates, clothed in sackcloth, devoted himself, with his family, to fasting and supplication. The night after, Volagases having received intelligence that the Dahæ and Sacæ had made an inroad into Parthia during his absence, retired back to his own dominions.

After a reign of twenty-four years, the wise and virtuous Izates was buried in the sepulchre of his fathers, and was succeeded by his elder brother Monobazus, who had distinguished himself by his affectionate loyalty to the late sovereign. The mournful news reached the aged Helena, in her pious retreat at Jerusalem, from which she hastened with many lamentations to Adiabene, where she soon afterwards expired. Monobazus caused her bones, and those of his

deceased brother, to be transported to Jerusalem, and buried in the pyramids which his mother had erected during her residence at the Holy City.

From the death of Izates, we find no mention of the kingdom of Adiabene until the time of Trajan, when the Adiabeni-ans, with their King Mebarsapes, joined Chosroes, King of Persia, against the Romans.* Mebarsapes was, however, driven from his dominions, and obliged to take refuge in Arabia, but soon after succeeded in effecting a peace, and seems to have returned to his kingdom. Another long interval of silence occurs respecting the affairs of this country, and we hear nothing of Adiabene till the reign of Sapor II., King of Persia, who was cotemporary with the Emperors Constans, Julian, and Jovian, and persecuted the Christians of Persia with great severity. Most of the inhabitants of Adiabene had by this time embraced the doctrines of the Gospel, and Arbela was the seat of a Christian bishop. The Adiabeni-ans are mentioned, in ecclesiastical history, as having withstood, with noble constancy, the efforts of their persecutors, and several bishops and priests watered with their blood the plains of ancient Assyria.†

The kingdom of Adiabene had now become a province of the Persian empire, and the very name of Nineveh was for a long period buried in obscurity. The caliphs, having subdued Persia, seem to have added Mosul and the vicinity to their dominions, among which it remained until the fall of Baghddad and the rise of the Ottoman power.

I have thus endeavored, briefly, to trace the history of Nineveh from the earliest records of its existence to the present time. Perhaps few places that have exercised great influence over the destinies of mankind have left so little to supply materials for the historian. Yet we may reasonably hope that the labors of Major Rawlinson and others will be attended with success, and that a vast fund of information, derived from the cuneiform inscriptions, may soon be added to the few and scanty pages which, up to a recent period, have comprised what has been called the history of Assyria.

* Dio. in Trajan.

† Sozom. Eccl. Hist., lib. ii. cap. 12.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Remarks on the Ecclesiastical History of the Chaldeans.

At the period of the birth of Christ, the various religions professed by the inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Assyria, and Chaldea, were as numerous as the nations or races which composed the mixed population of those countries. The professors of the ancient system of idolatry which had prevailed before the Persian conquest were mingled with the followers of the Magi. The sacred groves that concealed from public view the mysteries of the Assyrian Venus were planted at the foot of the mountain, on whose lofty summit arose the fire temple of the image-hating Persians, while the simple synagogue of the Jew confronted the Grecian temple, adorned by the taste of the descendants of the Macedonian conquerors. The worship of the sun, and of the heavenly bodies, seems to have been the most prevalent form of idolatry in the Mesopotamian plains, while the opinions of the Magians respecting the evil nature of matter, the necessity of bodily mortification, and the continual conflict between the principles of good and evil, were certainly received by numerous votaries, and formed the germ of that heresy which, under the name of Gnosticism, impeded the progress of the early Christian church.

Nor was the Hebrew system without numerous representatives among the dwellers in Mesopotamia and Assyria. The Jews had met with signal favor and encouragement from the monarchs of Persia, and large numbers of them had preferred remaining at Babylon and Susa, to returning with Zorobabel to the land of their fathers. There seems strong reason for supposing that many accompanied the Macedonian conqueror in his Eastern expedition, and were allotted equal privileges with his Grecian followers. At a later period we find Izates, a powerful prince, making an open profession of Judaism, and inducing a large number of the chief men of Adiabene

to imitate his example. At the day of Pentecost, we read of strangers from Parthia, Media, Persia, and Mesopotamia, assembled to celebrate the festival of the Passover at Jerusalem, and numbered afterwards among the hearers of the apostles. Some of these doubtless became converts to the new faith, and diffused among their countrymen, after their return, the knowledge of the principles which they had imbibed.

The three Magi who had been miraculously guided to the humble stable of Bethlehem, where they saw and adored the infant Saviour, are reckoned by the Chaldeans among their earliest missionaries; nor does this tradition seem entirely void of probability. Other Oriental writers record that St. Peter, St. Thomas, St. Bartholomew, and St. Matthew propagated among the Chaldeans the tenets of the Divine Saviour.*

But the first town of any note on the eastern bank of the Euphrates which received the teaching of the apostles, appears to have been the city of Edessa, the ancient Ur, and the modern Urfa. During the lifetime of the Saviour, a chieftain of the name of Agbarus or Akbar occupied this city and its adjoining territory. Moved by the reports which he had received of the miracles of a great Jewish teacher, he is said to have dispatched an epistle to our Lord, offering to afford him a safe asylum from the malice of the Jews. Writers of no small note have affirmed that the Saviour returned him a gracious answer, accompanied by his picture, and the intimation that an apostle should be sent to him after the resurrection to instruct him more fully in the way of truth.

I shall not enter upon the frequently discussed question as to whether such an event did really take place; yet it must be remembered that Eusebius, who relates it, professes to have derived his information from documents preserved in the public archives of the city.† At the present day, a spring is pointed out in the neighborhood of Urfah, into which, it is said, the picture was thrown at the time of the Mohammedan conquest; and even at Aleppo I found bottles of water which had been brought thence as a remedy against sickness.

It is certain that, a short time after the day of Pentecost, St. Thaddeus, one of the Seventy, preached the Gospel at Edessa, accompanied by his disciples Ag hæus or Ad æus, and

* *Assem.*, tom. iii.

† *Euseb. Eccl. Hist.*, lib. i. c. 13.

Mares.* Their mission met with great success, the King Akbar and his court embraced Christianity, and Edessa became the chief school or university of the Christian teachers in the East.

From Edessa, the missionaries extended their spiritual conquests to Assyria and Chaldea. Nisibis, and the regions beyond the Tigris, were visited by them; and Mares, one of the disciples of Thaddeus, received from the hands of St. Thomas the episcopal office, and the charge of the See of Seleucia, a city which derived its being and its name from the Macedonian Seleucidæ.

The accounts of the apostolical labors of Thomas, Nathaniel, and Bartholomew, are varied and frequently confused; yet it seems certain that, before the close of the first century, a large and increasing number of Christians occupied the plains of Mesopotamia, and the great cities of Amida, Nisibis, Arbela, and Seleucia. The faith had also made great progress in Persia, as the Parthian monarchs who governed it at that period seem to have been by no means intolerant, most probably because they were not professors of the dominant Magian creed.

At the commencement of the second century, Abraham, the second in succession from Mares, presided over the church at Seleucia. During his time, a violent persecution was excited against the Christians of Persia by the arts of the Magi, who dreaded the encroachments of the new faith. Many martyrs perished on this occasion, but it was suspended at the intercession of Abraham, who had been recently consecrated, at Antioch, Metropolitan of Seleucia. His prayers had been sought for on behalf of the king's son, who labored under a painful and dangerous disease; but when Abraham appeared before the monarch in obedience to the royal summons, his countenance was sad and dejected. The king, whose name is said to have been Chosroes, inquired the cause of his sorrow, whereupon the bishop complained of the misfortune under which his people suffered, and exposed the injustice of their persecutors. Moved by his appeal, the monarch made a solemn promise that, if his

* The Oriental writers mention two persons of the name of Thaddeus, to one of whom they give the appellation of Adæus, which is probably only a corruption of Aghæus. They seem to have confused the labors of St. Thaddeus with those of his disciple. Vide Assem., tom. iii.

prayers proved successful, the course of the persecution should be arrested. The intercession of Abraham is said to have procured health for the sufferer, and the grateful parent used his influence and authority to protect his Christian subjects.*

Shortly after this event, the expedition of Trajan took place, and this prince, whose hands had already been imbrued in the blood of Ignatius of Smyrna, treated the Christians of Edessa with great severity. His forces overran Adiabene, Mesopotamia, and Chaldea, where he seems to have afflicted the rising churches with equal cruelty. The fact that the Eastern Christians were generally subjects of the monarchs of Persia and Parthia, rendered them objects of suspicion to the Roman government. When Achadbues, a priest of Seleucia, repaired in company with one Jabjesu to Antioch, that he might receive consecration to the episcopal office, the fellow-travelers were arrested by the Roman magistrate as Persian spies, and Achadbues escaped, by flight only, a cruel and lingering death. The unfortunate Jabjesu, with his host, were dragged before the prætor and crucified, notwithstanding they loudly protested their innocence of any evil or treasonable intention. Achadbues succeeded in reaching Jerusalem, where he obtained consecration as bishop, and returned soon after to Seleucia.

After the decease of Achadbues, his successor Sciachlupha was prevented from repairing to Antioch by the war which was then raging between the Parthians and the Romans. He was therefore consecrated by the neighboring bishops, who had lately increased greatly in numbers; and this seems to have been the first step towards the separation of the church of the extreme East from the patriarchate of Antioch. The latter see, in early times, possessed the chief jurisdiction over the Christians of Mesopotamia and Persia. Antioch was not only the metropolitan city of the Roman dominions in the East, but it was the place where the disciples of Jesus had first received the cherished title of Christians. From Antioch the zealous missionaries of the Gospel had gone forth to the remote regions beyond the Euphrates. To her the Orientals owed their rites and their doctrines, and by her judgment they regulated their decisions in questions of faith. It was

* Bar Hebræus apud Assem. tom. iii.

natural, therefore, that, during the first and second centuries, the Metropolitans of Seleucia and Persia should testify their allegiance to the patriarch of the Syrian city, by receiving at his hands those privileges and powers which were necessary for the due discharge of their sacred and important duties. But as time rolled on, and Christianity extended itself in Persia, and on the banks of the Tigris, it seemed incongruous that the chief bishop of a tract of country almost extra-patriarchal in extent, should continue subject to the spiritual ruler of a district far removed from the place of his residence, and with whom he had few opportunities of taking counsel, or of holding official intercourse. Nor were these difficulties diminished by the political arrangements which then prevailed. With the exception of the Christians of Nisibis and Amida, the whole of those to whom, for the sake of distinction, I shall **affix** the title of Chaldeans, were subject to the authority of the Persian or Parthian kings. The former always looked **suspiciously** on the Christianity of their Chaldean subjects, as they considered it a tie of union which bound them to their Roman foes. It must also be remembered that the journey to Antioch from Seleucia was not always a safe one in times of peace, as the intervening country was frequently the seat of warfare, which of course entirely intercepted all communication. It soon became evident, therefore, that the Chaldeans of the East must sooner or later withdraw themselves from a jurisdiction which afforded them much inconvenience and little benefit. Their distant position had also a tendency to prevent their feeling much sympathy with the movements or theological investigations of the Eastern Syrian Church. In their remote regions, the echo of the logical disputes of Antioch and Edessa never reached them, or, if it did, was entirely lost upon a people who lacked the subtle, curious spirit of the Asiatic Greeks. It is not improbable, therefore, that their notions were often illogical and ill-digested, or that they adhered with blind fondness to antiquated forms of expression which the perversion of Western heresy had rendered it ambiguous and dangerous to use.*

About the middle of the third century, Sapor or Shapoor I. succeeded Ardsheer or Artaxares, who was the first monarch of the Sassanides. The Persian race had now recovered the

* Bar Hebræus apud Assem., tom. iii.

ascendency over their Parthian rulers, and the new sovereigns felt or feigned a zeal for the ancient institutions of their country, which led them to tolerate, and perhaps encourage, the persecution of their Christian subjects.

Sapor had no sooner ascended the throne than a sanguinary war broke out between Persia and Rome. The Persian king, at the head of a large army, ravaged the Mesopotamian provinces with fire and sword, and even captured Antioch itself. He was, however, compelled speedily to retreat. The Emperor Gordian retook in the course of one campaign all that had been wrested from the Romans, and was even about to lay siege to Ctesiphon, when he was assassinated by Philip, the Arabian, who, anxious to reap the fruits of his perfidy, concluded a hasty peace with the Persians, and returned to Antioch.

In the year 250, the persecution which Decius had commenced against the Christians at Rome penetrated to the remote region of Mesopotamia. Several Persians received the crown of martyrdom during its continuance; while, to add to the calamities of the Chaldean Christians, the armies of Sapor invaded the Roman territories after the death of Decius, and the proud monarch of the East had the gratification of beholding the Emperor Valerian a captive in Persia.* The valor of Odenatus of Palmyra alone maintained the honor of Rome, and the imperial city of the Cæsars was indebted to a Syrian for the safety of her Eastern provinces. Sapor founded, to commemorate his victories, a city entitled Gandisapor, which is chiefly noted as having attracted thither several Greek physicians, who translated into the Oriental languages the medical works of Hippocrates.

The third century produced two heresiarchs, whose opinions made some progress in the East. The first of these was Paul of Samosata, who had been raised by the influence of Zenobia to the Bishopric of Antioch. He was vain, presumptuous, and self-conceited, nor did the excellence of his moral character compensate for the defects of his understanding. The hatred and disgust of his opponents may have exaggerated the charges brought against him, yet his conduct even an impartial judge must pronounce in every respect unworthy of a Christian bishop. The heresy which he held

* Acta Martyr. Oriental. Pagius ad Ann. 297, apud Assemani.

and taught, seems to have been "That Christ and the Holy Ghost were not distinct persons in the Godhead, but merely the representatives of certain divine attributes, which it pleased God to manifest under their names, and that Jesus Christ was a mere man, upon whom the wisdom or reason of the Father descended, in order to work out certain ends." The immediate followers of Paul were not numerous, but his system lingered in the Eastern schools, and perhaps produced in many minds a scarcely perceptible bias towards the opinions which were afterwards advocated and defended by Nestorius.*

The second heresiarch alluded to was Manes, or Manichæus, a Persian by birth, who endeavored to combine the doctrines of the Gospel with the Magian philosophy. The opinions of this person, having already been noticed at some length in the course of this work, I shall not recapitulate his tenets, which, however, at first excited some attention in Persia, where the doctrine was perhaps secretly favored by many of the Magi. The success of his system in his native land induced the heresiarch to attempt the propagation of his errors in Mesopotamia and the parts adjacent. Some writers affirm, however, that he was obliged to leave Persia to avoid the anger of the king, whose son he had failed in curing, after he had undertaken to restore him to health by a miracle. While in Mesopotamia he challenged Archelaus, Bishop of Casarea, to a public disputation, in which he was manifestly defeated; and returned foiled and disappointed to his native country, where the officers of the king seized and conveyed him to a royal fortress, where he was flayed alive and perished miserably.†

At the commencement of the fourth century, the course of the Manichæan heresy had been to a certain extent arrested by the zealous endeavors of Archelaus and others, but it still continued for many centuries to retain many secret and avowed supporters in the regions of the East. The Christians of Persia enjoyed for a short time the blessings of tranquillity and peace, while their brethren in the Roman territories were suffering severely from the persecution which had lately been commenced by the Emperors Carus and Numerian.

* Mosheim, Eccles. Hist., Cent. III. Burton. Hist. of the First Three Centuries.

† Mosheim, Cent. III. Photius Adversus Manichæos. Beausobre Histoire du Manichéisme.

But they were soon destined to experience the same misfortunes; for the Romans, having broken the peace which Probus had made with the Persians, invaded Mesopotamia, and captured Seleucia, Ctesiphon, and Coche, inflicting great cruelties on the Christian inhabitants of those places.

From the nature of its position, Edessa was the first to experience the severity of the emperor. Since the days of Agbarus, its schools had been the receptacles and the dispensers of Christian learning. Macarius gave lectures in Syriac, upon the text of Scripture, and instructed in Biblical criticism the future priests and bishops of the Syro Chaldean Church.

After the death of Carus, the Persians recovered, for a short time, the regions of Mesopotamia, but they suffered great loss towards the termination of the reign of Diocletian. Galerius concluded a peace with them, or rather a truce of forty years, by the terms of which the general Roman boundary was terminated by the Tigris, and the five provinces of Azanene, Sophene, Intilene, Zabdicene, and Corduene, situated on the eastern side of that river, were ceded to Rome.*

About this time, monachism was first introduced into Mesopotamia from Egypt by Aones, who seems to have been the disciple of the Syrian Hilarion. The climate of Mesopotamia and the character of its inhabitants were favorable to the progress of the new system. The dry, arid nature of the former presented few incentives to the appetite, and rendered rigid fasting less difficult than it would have been found in colder regions, while the sober, meditative, and grave character of the Oriental inclined him to view favorably a life of contemplation. Aones soon numbered some of the most ardent, learned, and zealous of the Eastern priesthood among his followers, at the head of whom stands the celebrated James of Nisibis, whose name and actions I have alluded to in another place.†

Yet the monks of the East must not be confounded with those idle and luxurious drones who have so often excited the ridicule and contempt of Western Europe. Aones, who is also called Eugenius, employed his disciples in works of practical utility. Freed from all restraint and impediment, which the ties of matrimony or the quiet seductions of a comfortable home might have cast in their path, they went boldly forth to in-

* Assem., tom. iii. Dissertatio.

* Assem., tom. iii.

struct the population of the most miserable villages, and the inhabitants of the steepest and most rugged mountains. Fearless of danger, they scaled the precipices of Kurdistan, and poured into the ear of the dying Carduchian the consolations of a faith which had induced them to brave all perils for the love of God and of man. With a wallet on his shoulders, and a traveling staff in his hand, the Chaldean monk, transformed at a moment's notice into a zealous and active missionary, crossed the widest rivers, and traversed the most inhospitable plains. His home was the first cottage that afforded the shelter of its mud walls to the wandering stranger, his food the fare of the humblest peasant, his companions the rude and ignorant tillers of the earth, whose toils he lightened, and whose troubles he consoled by the bright and glorious tidings on which, with rude but touching eloquence, he loved to dilate. Such were the men who in the fourth century of the Christian era evangelized the numerous inhabitants of Mesopotamia and Assyria, such were also their successors, who in after ages spread the triumphs of Christianity over the distant regions of Tartary, India, and China.

Shortly after the introduction of monachism into the Eastern church, a schism took place which was provoked by the pride and intolerable arrogance of Papas, the son of Aghæus, Archbishop of Ctesiphon and Seleucia. This unworthy successor of St. Thaddeus treated the priests and deacons of his church with indignity and contempt, while he proudly rejected the authority of the Synod which had assembled to take cognizance of his unjust and unchristian proceedings.

Milles, Bishop of Susa, had long been noted among the Chaldeans for the purity of his doctrine and the innocence of his life. He accosted Papas in a public assembly with all the fervor of a zealous and earnest mind—"Dost thou think," he indignantly exclaimed, "that the faults of thy brethren give thee a just right to treat them with pride and scorn? Can it be that thou deemest the words of God a fable, which teach that he who would be chief among Christians should be the servant of all?"

Papas answered the remonstrance of the venerable bishop with derisive contempt, upon which Milles, taking from his bag the manuscript of the Gospel, placed it respectfully on a desk in the midst.

"If thou wilt not hear these words," he said, with calm

dignity, "from me who am but a mortal like thyself, consult the decisions of the Evangelists, which now lay open before the eyes of thy body, though I fear they are hidden from the view of thy mind."

Almost beside himself with rage, Papas insolently advanced in the midst, and striking the holy volume with his clenched hand, he cried, in a sneering tone, "Speak, O Gospel! speak if thou canst, since verily my speech faileth me."

Penetrated with grief, the aged Milles rushed forward, overcome by emotions of horror and regret. With both hands he seized the sacred tome, covered it with kisses, and pressed it respectfully to his forehead. Then turning to Papas, he said, with deep solemnity, "Because thou hast thus shamefully treated the word of the living God, behold his angel standeth beside thee, and shall cause thy hand to wither, which has offered such insult to him."

The historian adds that the right side of Papas was suddenly smitten with paralysis, and that he continued until the day of his death an object of astonishment and terror to many.*

Simeon succeeded the unworthy Papas in the see of Seleucia, and was present at the council of Nice, where the heresy of Arius was condemned. The creed drawn up by the bishops there assembled was generally received by the Chaldean church, and is held by their descendants even at the present day. I shall transcribe it as it is now recited in their churches. It is entitled "The creed that was composed by three hundred and eighteen Holy Fathers, who were assembled at Nice, a city of Bithynia, in the time of King Constantine the Pious, on account of Arius the accursed infidel.

"We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things, both visible and invisible, and in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only begotten of His Father before all worlds, who was not created, True God of True God, of the same substance with His Father; by whose hands the worlds were made, and all things created, who for us men, and for our salvation, descended from Heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost and became man, and was conceived and born of the Virgin, and suffered and was crucified in the days of Pontius Pilate, and died and was buried, and rose on the third day according to the Scriptures, and ascended into

* Bar Hebræus apud Assemani, tom. iii.

Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of His Father, and is again to come and judge the living and the dead.

“And we believe one Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, who proceedeth from the Father, the Spirit that giveth life.

“And in one Holy and Catholic Church.

“We acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.”

Eight years before the council sat, a violent persecution was directed by Sapor II. against those Christians who inhabited the Persian dominions. The cause of this is assigned to the malice of the Jews and Magians, who succeeded in stirring up the king against the followers of the Gospel. It is likely, however, that motives of secular policy had some weight in the councils of Sapor. He viewed with suspicion and aversion those who held the same faith with the most deadly enemies of the Persian name; and he might, not perhaps unreasonably, consider that their journeys into the Roman dominions, though ostensibly for religious purposes, had some ulterior end in view. His patriotism impelled him to support that creed under whose auspices Persia had risen in early times to influence and dominion, while a mind thus prone to take an unfavorable view of the Gospel was still more incensed by the complaints of the Magi and the encroachments of the new faith.

This persecution, which lasted for nearly forty years, was one of the most grievous that had hitherto befallen the Chaldean Church. Simeon, the aged metropolitan of Seleucia, with many other bishops, and a vast number of priests and deacons, yielded up their lives amid torments of the most excruciating character. The region of Adiabene was among those places which felt most severely the effects of the monarch's rage. It was governed by a Satrap, whose name, Sennacherib, recalls the old days of the Assyrian monarchy. He equaled in cruelty, if not in greatness, the renowned monarch whose name he bore. An aged abbot, named Matthew, had erected a monastery on the brow of a mountain, fifteen miles from Mosul, which still bears his name. In the same province Behnam, whose history has been already referred to, was distinguishing himself together with his sister by the ardent zeal with which they propagated the doctrine of Christ. Forty associates and fellow-laborers made their appearance with the three above mentioned before the Per-

sian Satrap. But the persecutors cared neither for age nor sex, and the whole body were at once dragged off to die. They suffered with patient constancy, but their blood did not quench the flame of persecution. A vast multitude of both sexes were seized, and doomed to cruel and lingering deaths.*

The expedition under Julian terminated fatally for the Romans, and by an ignominious treaty, the city of Nisibis was surrendered to the Persian monarch. An innumerable crowd of citizens, among which the majority were Christians, followed the retreat of Jovian, forsaking for ever the homes where they had so long dwelt in happiness and tranquillity. One voice was raised with honest courage to rebuke the pusillanimity of the emperor in the accents of sarcastic reproach; and the vain and arrogant Jovian was but too glad to conceal himself from the murmurs of those whom his want of courage and conduct had driven forth as wanderers and fugitives.†

In the year 419 of the Christian era, and the twentieth of the reign of Yezdegerd, the rash zeal of Abdas, Bishop of Susa, provoked a renewal of the persecution. The prelate had destroyed a fire-temple belonging to the Magi, and this imprudent and indefensible action so excited the anger of the king that he put to death the bishop and some of his presbyters, and ordered the Christian Church to be leveled with the ground. The intercession of one of his Christian officers, however, appeased his fury, but not before a small number of persons had suffered martyrdom.

Soon after the persecution had ceased, war broke out between the Romans and the Persians, on account of the protection and succor which the former had afforded to some Christian fugitives. During the hostilities which ensued, the Romans laid waste the province of Azanene, and carried with them to Amida a band of wretched captives, whose naked and miserable condition exciting the commiseration of Acacius, the bishop of that city, he sold the sacred utensils of the church, and parted with all his own property to relieve their wants. The unhappy Persians obtained by his means a release from their bondage, and were clothed and furnished with all the necessaries that they required by the aid of the

* Assem., tom. iii.

† Gibbon, chap. xxv.

charitable prelate, whose munificent and truly Christian benevolence had the double effect of soothing the miseries inflicted by the horrors of war and of disposing the King of Persia to regard with more good will the religion which produced such excellent fruits.*

CHAPTER XXIV.

Remarks on the ecclesiastical history of the Chaldeans.

THE Chaldean or Assyrian Church maintained, during the first four centuries of the Christian era, a perfect and uninterrupted communion with her sisters of Asia, Africa, and Europe; her prelates assisted in their councils, and her martyrs were gratefully mentioned in their martyrologie. But the time was now fast approaching when the bonds of union were to be severed, and discord and division prevail among those who had hitherto considered each other as brethren in the one faith.

The subject which provoked these fatal disputes was one which the wisdom and ingenuity of man can never fathom with entire satisfaction, or express with perfect intelligibility. The Incarnation of our Saviour, the process whereby a Divine Being united himself to our human nature, had from the beginning of the promulgation of Christianity excited the speculations of restless and inquisitive minds. The active subtlety of the Greek intellect had led many into heresy on this important matter, and the opinions of Apollinaris were, even at the commencement of the fifth century, troubling the peace of the church. The councils had hitherto contented themselves with determining that Christ was very God and very man, but they had said nothing on the manner in which the mysterious union was effected. Two opposite modes of expression therefore prevailed among the Syrian and Egyptian theologians. The former, in order to avoid the opinions of Apollinaris, who maintained that the Godhead of Christ performed in His human body the functions of a soul, were

* Gibbon, chap. xxxii. Assem., tom. iii.

exceedingly precise in maintaining the most marked distinction between the Godhead and the manhood of the Saviour ; while the latter, in their zeal against Gnosticism, seemed almost to confuse both the human and divine natures, and to blend them into one. Hitherto, however, both schools had remained at peace with each other, and although they might differ in words and terms, their differences had never been thought of sufficient importance to mar the unity of the church.*

Matters were in this state when Nestorius, who had been educated in the schools of Antioch and Edessa, was raised to the patriarchate of Constantinople. The learning of the new prelate was marred by the vanity and self-conceit of his character, as well as by the bigoted intolerance which he displayed against those who differed with him in opinion. From the pulpit of the cathedral of Constantinople, he publicly called upon the emperor to crush all heretics with the secular arm, promising him, at the same time, as an inducement, the aid of his prayers against the Persians.

Among the chief favorites of Nestorius, was a presbyter named Anastasius, whose turgid and flowery discourses had procured for him great popularity. He was, like his patron, a favorer of the Syrian doctrine, and thought himself justified in attempting to attract a crowd of auditors, by introducing in his sermons sentiments which had the gloss of novelty to recommend them. The minds of the superficial and the ignorant are easily captivated by startling assertions, and the fertile brain of Anastasius seems at last to have hit upon an expedient of satisfying at once the patriarch's vanity and his own.

The numerous auditors who crowded the principal church of Constantinople, and who not unfrequently expressed their approbation and disapproval in a mode more suitable to the circus or the theatre, were astonished beyond measure to hear from the lips of Anastasius that the term *Theotokos*, which had been considered orthodox since the days of St. Athanasius, was a heretical and Apollinarian expression. The sermon of the presbyter excited some commotion, which was by no means allayed by the appearance of the patriarch as the defender of his friend.†

* Mosheim, *Ecc. Hist.*, Cent. V.

† Mosheim, *Cent. V.* Fleury, *Ecc. Hist.*, Cent. V.

The word *Theotokos*, as applied to the Virgin Mary, is scarcely susceptible of direct translation, and although sometimes rendered "Mother of God," it is better expressed by the paraphrase, "She who bore Him that was God." Those who defended the use of the term argued that Elizabeth had termed the Blessed Virgin "the Mother of my Lord," and that the latter word was equally significative of the divine nature of the Saviour. They referred their opponents to the language used by St. Paul, in which he speaks, without scruple, of the blood of God as expressive of the close union which existed between the two natures, authorizing the interchange of the terms proper to each. To this it was answered that the word *Christotokos*, the bearer or mother of Christ, was the fittest designation of the Holy Virgin, since she is called constantly in the Gospel the mother of Christ, and the Deity cannot properly be said either to be born or to die.

The works of Nestorius, in which he defended his favorite opinions, were widely disseminated and eagerly perused, while a large number of the Egyptian monks declared themselves to be convinced by his arguments, and abandoned the use of the term *Theotokos*. This proceeding brought the matter under the notice of Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria, who censured the conduct of the monks, and commenced a written controversy with Nestorius, which terminated little to the satisfaction of either party. After much inflammatory discussion of the subject in question, it was referred to the decision of a general council, which met at Ephesus, A. D. 431.*

The bishops of Greece, Europe, and Africa, having arrived at Ephesus, they waited several days for the arrival of John, Patriarch of Antioch, with the prelates of the East. But, as his coming was delayed from day to day, it seemed advisable to commence proceedings in his absence, the more particularly as the office of the different prelates did not allow them to remain for any length of time at a distance from their various spheres of duty. Cyril was chosen president of the assembly, and opened the session by summoning Nestorius to appear before them. The Patriarch of Constantinople declined to defend himself in the presence of a partial and imperfect tribunal, and refused to make his appearance. But

* Assem., tom. iii.

as he had of late written several works on the subject in debate, these were placed before the council, and the following errors were laid to his charge.

First, that he had denied the term *Theotokos* to the Blessed Virgin ; and, secondly, that he had asserted the existence of two separate and distinct persons in the Son of God. The contest, however, hinged principally on the latter assertion ; for, with regard to the former, the use or non-use of the particular word *Theotokos* was only regarded as important from its bearing on the true character of the Incarnation. The point in question, therefore, was whether the expressions used by Nestorius on the latter mystery were in accordance with the teaching of Scripture and the primitive Fathers. He had asserted that the Godhead dwelt in the Redeemer's human body, as in a shrine or temple, and he declared that he would never concede the title of God to one who increased daily in age by two months and three months. Other parts of his works seem even to set forth that the divine nature did not descend upon Christ till after His birth.

The evil consequences which might have resulted from these opinions being tolerated and encouraged in the church, were such, that the council could scarcely do otherwise than condemn them. In an age when theology was the one grand topic which interested men's minds, and when the fertile imaginations of the Greek doctors were but too prone to philosophize on the solemn doctrines of Christianity, it became doubly necessary that all definitions should as far as possible be free from exception. Nor did it require much foresight to perceive that the expressions of Nestorius so divided the Son of God from the Son of Man, that he impugned the divinity of Christ, and, therefore, struck at the very root of the doctrine of the atonement. If the Godhead dwelt merely in Christ as in a temple, He was but little exalted above those prophets upon whom it is said, in the Old Testament, that the Spirit of God rested, nor could the expressions of Nestorius be reconciled with the direct teaching of the Gospel, that "the Word was made flesh."*

The majority of the council had decided against him, when John of Antioch arrived. The latter seems, at first, to have taken part with the heresiarch, in which he was supported by

* Cyril, Epist. Mosheim, Cent. V. Palmer, Eccl. Hist.

the Eastern bishops, who were naturally partial to their own countryman. But, after some serious and animated discussions, the Patriarch of Antioch was led to concur in the decision of the council, and peace and unanimity were once more restored to the church.

The judgment put forth by the assembled bishops, and which has since been accepted by the generality of Christians, was this, "That in Christ our Lord there are two natures most closely and intimately united in one person without mixture or confusion." The almost unanimous consent to the sentence of the Ephesine Synod, which has since prevailed among all parties, is perhaps a conclusive argument in favor of its soundness and intelligibility, nor could Nestorius complain that upon the whole he was treated with injustice or partiality. Even if we admit that Cyril of Alexandria was moved by personal enmity to oppose a hated rival, it cannot be supposed that the whole of the bishops assembled, many of whom presided over dioceses in the patriarchate of Nestorius himself, were animated by similar feelings. Yet even supposing this insinuation correct, how shall we account for the acquiescence of John of Antioch and the Eastern bishops, who had already given the most unmistakeable proofs of their aversion to Cyril, and partiality to Nestorius.

The Nestorian controversy gave rise to another error, into which a strong desire to avoid the sentiments of Nestorius had propelled Eutyches, an abbot of Constantinople. This man taught that the divine and human natures of our Lord were so mingled as to form but one compounded nature, and his doctrine, after its condemnation at the Council of Chalcedon, in A. D. 451, was widely spread among the Christians of the East, many of whom also had begun to embrace the tenets of Nestorius.

The person to whom is chiefly attributable the progress of the Nestorian doctrine, was one Bar Sumas, a Persian by birth, who was educated in the University of Edessa. One of the colleges there was called, from the origin of the greater part of its scholars, the Persian school: the members of which were much attached to the writings of their former preceptors, Diodorus of Tarsus, and Theodore of Mopsuesta, under the latter of whom Nestorius himself had imbibed the principles of theology. These doctors of the Syrian Church

held and promulgated dogmas similar to those for which Nestorius was condemned, and their influence over the Persian school predisposed the minds of its members in favor of the tenets of the deposed patriarch. They were confirmed in their attachment to these views by an event which took place shortly after the condemnation of Nestorius.

Rabulus, Bishop of Edessa, had been at first one of the warmest supporters of the latter during the debates at Ephesus. He had seconded John of Antioch in his inimical proceedings against Cyril, but after his return a marked change took place in his views. He began to regard the Persian school with suspicious dislike, and at last broke it up entirely, and required the masters to leave the city with their disciples. Burning with resentment on account of the affront which they had received, the expelled students returned to Persia, and became noted for their zeal in propagating the opinions of Nestorius. The names of the principal men of this party were Bar Sumas, Acacius, and Manes, who obtained, in course of time, the sees of Nisibis, Seleucia, and Persia.

The great majority of the Chaldean Christians would doubtless have maintained a neutral position, but for the restless activity and intrigues of Bar Sumas, who seems to have obtained considerable influence at the Persian court. Having gained access to Firouz, who then occupied the throne of Persia, he represented to him the policy of dividing the Oriental Christians from the Greeks. He urged that, as long as both agreed in their doctrinal views, the affections of the Chaldeans would always be in danger of alienation from their lawful monarchs, and their allegiance might be tampered with by the Greek emperors. He concluded by counseling the Persian monarch to aid and protect him in extending those opinions which could not fail to excite and maintain perpetual enmity between the two races.

The counsel of Bar Sumas was eagerly adopted by Firouz; Babuæus, the Metropolitan of Seleucia, was put to death, and Acacius, one of the expelled students of Edessa, appointed in his room. At the same time, the Emperor Zeno, who favored the Monophysites, caused all Persian students to leave Edessa—an act which inflamed still more the anger of the Persian monarch, who commenced a furious persecution against all Christians opposed to the doctrines of Nestorius. At the head of a large band of soldiers, the infamous Bar

Sumas marched over the Assyrian plains, and massacred without pity about seven thousand persons. The body of Bar Sobedes, Bishop of Nineveh, which was among the slain, was carried off and honorably interred by a Jew who had lately embraced the Christian faith.

The process of Nestorianism was finally triumphant in the churches of Assyria under Babuæus, who was raised to the See of Seleucia A. D. 496, and who first threw off the allegiance of Antioch, and assumed the title of Patriarch of the East.

Among the bishops of Western Asia, a few supported the cause, and embraced the tenets of Nestorius; but, in a century after the Council of Ephesus, all external traces of the heresy had disappeared from the Roman dominions in the East. This was mainly attributable to the expulsion of the Persians from Edessa, and to the great prevalence of the Monophysite doctrine in that celebrated university. Fostered by the Emperor Zeno and Severus, Patriarch of Antioch, the disciples of Eutyches had nearly succeeded in gaining for the dogma of the one nature, a reception almost universal. The Monophysite Syrians became the most violent opponents of Nestorianism, and obliged the opposers of the Council of Ephesus to confine themselves exclusively to the Persian dominions.*

The monarchs of Persia, on the other hand, when they discovered that their Chaldean subjects were violently averse to the rule and the tenets of the Greek emperors, began to treat them with greater toleration than before. The loss of the school at Edessa was compensated by the foundation of Chaldean seminaries at Nisibis and Arbela, where the doctors of the Nestorian sect propagated their opinions with great success. They began to review and to refine the terms of their creed, and to clothe its doctrines in less objectionable language. They labored to prove that they had not followed the sentiments of a private individual, but were maintaining, in all its purity, the technical phraseology which had always been received in their church from the days of the apostles. Their doctrine, after much discussion and difference of opinion, assumed at length the following form, which was solemnly set forth and defended by several councils assembled at Seleucia:—

* Assem., tom. iii.

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reprinted from the original
"In Christ there are two substances, two natures, two persons, namely, the Divine Person of the Word, and the human Person of Jesus. But both these two natures and two persons are closely united by the existence of one will, one operation, one power, one prosopon or appearance, and one aspect. The Blessed Virgin is not to be termed, therefore, the mother of God, but the mother of Christ."*

The meaning of these dogmas will be more clearly illustrated, perhaps, by the following extract from one of their most esteemed authors, who composed an exposition of the Nicene Creed: "We say," he writes, "that the Word was united with the [humanity] assumed by a union of will, of adhesion,† and of person.

"Wherefore Christ is one, even one son, since there is a union of will. As, in like manner, two or three men differing from each other in essence and person may be united by the agreement of their several wills, for the Scripture saith, 'To the believing there was one mind and one will.' There is a union of adhesion, which resembles the union of a man and his wife, who, according to the Gospel, become one flesh, as it is said, 'Wherefore a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife.' The union of person is as the union of a king and his friend, the latter of whom often holds the place of the former, and exercises rule, authority, and power. In this manner, the Eternal Son is united to the assumed human nature, and hence is made one Christ, one son, one will, by means of the contiguity of the persons, but not naturally. Wherefore Christ is termed two natures, two persons, but one son, even as in the Scriptures David and Jonathan, a man and his wife, a king and his friend, are sometimes called two prosopa.‡ Thus, the Eternal Son and the man Jesus Christ are one. As David and Jonathan, a man and his wife, a king and his friend, have but one will in all things, so in the Eternal Word, and in the assumed humanity, there exists also only one will."

By a careful perusal of the above, it will be seen that the Nestorians differed from other Christians in teaching that the

* Mosheim, Cent. V. Assem., tom. iii.

† The word used signifies the union, real or supposed, which is derived from the contiguity of two persons or things.

‡ The words "Prosopa" and "Prosopon" denote the outward form and appearance which distinguish one person from another.

union between the manhood and the Godhead was figurative merely, and not real or substantial. They held that the Deity dwelt in the human body of Jesus as in a temple, and hence they denied the title of Cheotokos to the Virgin Mary. A careful distinction is always maintained, in their controversial writings, between God and Christ, the union between them being always described as one solely of will and affection, or adhesion, as will be seen by the examples referred to above.

All communication having been broken off between the Sees of Antioch and Seleucia, the metropolitan of the latter was regarded by all the Persian bishops as the head of their new community. The title of Patriarch of the Chaldeans seems to have been assumed by the new spiritual chief, though some of his successors termed themselves Patriarchs of the East. At the commencement of the sixth century, Cosmas Indicopleustes described their dominion as extending over Persia, India, and Arabia Felix.

About the year 530 A. D., Patricius, Archbishop of Persia, ordained priests, deacons, and even bishops, for the regions of Calliana Male (Malabar), and Sielediva (Ceylon). The Bactrians, the Huns, the Persarmeni, the Medes and Elamites, numbered, in their several countries, large and flourishing congregations, who obeyed the authority of the Chaldean patriarch.

In Arabia, the doctrines of Nestorianism appear to have prevailed for some time prior to the birth of Mohammed, who is reported to have derived considerable information and assistance from Sergius, a Chaldean monk. It is stated, on credible authority, that Jesuabab, Patriarch of the Nestorians, went in company with Said, the chief of an Arab-Christian tribe, to visit the Prophet at Mecca, and obtained from him a written compact, whereby he promised to respect the faith and the privileges of the Chaldeans of the East. The authenticity and genuineness of this document have been much disputed, and those who impugn its veracity have considered it as the forgery of some Nestorian or Syrian monks, the latter of whom were, as is generally admitted, at one time guilty of a similar fraud. Yet, when we consider the mutual hostility which prevailed between these two sects, as well as the known favor with which the Mohammedans afterwards treated the Nestorians, the fact that such a grant emanated

Arabian Impostor may be considered at least pro-
document commends the Christians to the good will
Arabs, and charges that they shall not be molested or
in any manner. They are not to be compelled to
their customs or their laws; and the aid of a Moslem
be lawfully employed in rebuilding a ruined church.
ests and monks are not required to pay tribute. A mode-
tax is placed upon both rich and poor, and it is expressly
bidden that the Christian female servant or slave, who
ves in the house of an Arab, should be molested in the
formance of her religious duties.*

remes, the successor of Jesuhabus, is recorded to have
ned from Ali Ben Abi Taleb a similar document, in
ard for certain services which he rendered the Moslem
y during the siege of Mosul, about A. D. 648. The
bian conquerors seem to have adhered faithfully to their
ten promises; and the successor of Maremes, in writing
to Simon, Metropolitan of Persia, commends the honor which
they bestowed on the saints and servants of God, their veneration for Christianity, and even their gifts to churches and
convents.

It is not improbable, indeed, that the toleration bestowed on the Christians by the Moslem invader proceeded from a grateful sense of the services which the former had rendered them during their campaigns in Mesopotamia and Persia. The bigotry of the Magi had alienated the affections of the Chaldeans from the Persian monarch, and they hoped, doubtless, to find themselves less exposed to persecution under those whose creed was partially adopted from their own.

CHAPTER XXV.

Remarks on the ecclesiastical history of the Chaldeans.

THE Arabian Caliphs of Baghdad were generally men of a very different character from the rude and ignorant fanatics

* Assem., tom. iii.

who first assumed to themselves the title of Successors of the Prophet. Several members of the house of Abbas were distinguished by the encouragement which they afforded to poetry and polite literature, while the arts which they cultivated seem to have rendered their political and religious sentiments more tolerant and humane. The Christians, reviled and insulted in other parts of the East, found both protection and support from the chief pontiffs of Islam. Their knowledge of medicine and of Greek learning gained them favor from the polished sovereigns, who amused their leisure hours by poetical compositions, which have not been considered by posterity entirely void of merit. Aristotle, Plato, and Hippocrates soon appeared in an Arabian dress, while the skill of the Nestorian physicians rendered their services of no small value to the caliphs and their nobles.

The Greek Melekites and the Syrian Jacobites seem to have possessed churches and congregations at Baghdad during the dynasty of the Abbasides; but of all Christians, the Nestorians were held in the greatest esteem. They had rendered signal services to the Mohammedan cause; and it is not improbable that their known enmity to the Greeks induced the Caliphs to regard them as more firm adherents than the Melekites or Jacobites, both of whom were suspected of a secret attachment to the emperors of the East.

Nor was it merely as physicians and scholars that the Nestorians distinguished themselves at this period. They obtained occasionally the government of cities and provinces, a policy in which Abdallah, the son of Suleiman, was supported and encouraged on one occasion by the Caliph Motaded himself. Some zealous Mussulmen had accused the satrap to his sovereign of showing more favor to Christians than was just and right. The Caliph presented his officer with the written complaint, upon which Abdallah answered that he had, indeed, appointed trustworthy Christians, Magians, and even Jews, to offices of trust; but that this circumstance rendered him no more favorable to the religion of the one than of the other.

The Caliph replied, "You do well to use the services of Christians when you can obtain them, and even to give them a special preference over Jews, Mohammedans, and Magi, seeing that their obedience and faith are more praiseworthy than either of these. For the Jews expect a future kingdom

that will overthrow our power; the Mohammedans will endeavor to circumvent thee and usurp thy dignity; while the Magi have not forgotten their lost rule. Therefore, I deem it more politic that thou shouldst commit the chief posts in thy province to Christians."

The Caliph's opinion seems to have influenced, also, his successors, and we find Christian governors were frequently appointed to the provinces of Adiabene, Assyria, and Nisibis.*

The power of the Nestorian physicians and secretaries† was not only exerted in protecting the members of their sect from the tyranny of the Mohammedans, but it enabled them also to control the internal affairs of their community. Their influence prevailed to a great extent in ecclesiastical matters; they nominated and deposed patriarchs, and appointed bishops to their sees. A canon contained in the Chaldean Pontifical recognizes their authority and their privileges, by intrusting the election of patriarchs to a mixed assemblage of bishops, priests, physicians, and scribes. On one occasion, we find Abraham, the son of Noah, a physician, was permitted to name whom he would as the chief of the Chaldean Church. His nominee, however, was opposed by Boch Yesus, another layman, whose influence with the Caliph Motawakkel enabled him to carry his point.

The Nestorian patriarch was recognized by the Caliphs as the head of all other Christians in their dominions. Some Greek inhabitants of Baghdad sent a petition to the Patriarch of Antioch, in which they begged him to appoint a metropolitan holding the Melekite faith to the See of Seleucia. He complied with their request, and dispatched an ecclesiastic, whose name was John, to assume the rank of a metropolitan, and to regulate the affairs of the Greeks. But Abraham, the head of the Nestorian Church, considering this act an invasion of his privileges, carried the case before the wuzeer, who, being propitiated by a large bribe, determined it in his favor, and decreed that in future no Greek metropolitan or bishop should take up his residence at Baghdad, seeing that the

* Mares in Vita Abrahæ Patriarch. Thomas Margensis, tom. iii. Assemani, tom. iii.

† I have used this term as the best translation of the Arabic Katib, which signified literally a writer or scribe.

Patriarch of the Nestorians was the only chief of the Christians recognized by law.

The Caliph, Moktadi Biamerallah, granted the Patriarch Machica a document, in which the following terms occur: "The Commander of the Faithful appointeth thee the catholicos of the Christian Nestorians residing in Baghdad, the city of peace, and in the other provinces and regions; he declareth thee their prelate, and the spiritual governor of all Jacobites and Greeks also, who dwell in the countries of the Mohammedans, or have come thither; and it is commanded that all obey thy orders and commands."

Yet, notwithstanding these honors and privileges, the state of the Nestorians under the Caliphs was precarious and uncertain. The fickle character of a despotism like that under which they lived often brought them under the frown of the sovereign, when individual members of their sect had been so unfortunate as to displease him. The intrigues of ambitious patriarchs and aspiring laymen often rent the community asunder, while under the Egyptian Caliph, Hakim Biamerallah, a persecution was excited against the Christians, the effects of which seem to have been felt as far as Baghdad.

It seems now a fitting opportunity to notice the missions of the Nestorians, and the character of the different regions and people whither their enterprising missionaries penetrated.

Shortly after their expulsion from Edessa, a large and flourishing school was formed by the Nestorians at Nisibis, which had been recently taken by Sapor from the Romans. The captured city, it is likely, was almost entirely peopled by Chaldean inhabitants, who replaced those followers of the Greek rite that had accompanied Jovian in his retreat. From Nisibis they penetrated into the provinces of Upper and Lower Armenia, while a large number lived peaceably in Cilicia and Asia Minor, under the protection of the princes of those countries, and the Greek emperors. At a later period, we find them in Palestine, and even in Cyprus, whither they had doubtless followed the retreating crusaders.

But their chief success seems to have been in the more eastern regions of Asia. They gained numerous proselytes at an early period in Persia, and from that kingdom they appear to have advanced into Afghanistan, India, and Tartary.

The Chaldean writers inform us that St. Thomas was the first who announced the tidings of Christianity to the inhabitants of

the Malabar coast, where the Portuguese discovered large and flourishing congregations, who entitled themselves the spiritual children of this apostle. From Western India he proceeded to the Coromandel coast, which he left for the remote regions of China, and preached with great success in the city of Cambalu, which is supposed to be the modern Pekin. From Cambalu he returned to the city of Meliapore, situated near the modern town of Madras, and still known by the title of St. Thomé, where he suffered martyrdom, and in the vicinity of which he is said to have been buried. The tradition seems to have prevailed from a very early period, and the Roman and Armenian Christians of Madras still point out a small hillock, eight miles from Fort St. George, which is revered as the site of the apostle's tomb.

Whatever credit may be given to the above statements, it appears certain that, at a very early period, Nestorian priests and bishops were found in the peninsula of India. The metropolitan who presided over these was consecrated in Persia, and the primate of the latter country deemed his ecclesiastical rule, in the seventh century, to be sufficiently extensive to allow of his withdrawing himself from the obedience of the Patriarch of Baghdad. In Guzzerat and Lahore, in Candahar and Cabul, numerous bodies of Christians flourished in peace and tranquillity, whose bishops were frequently summoned to the councils held at Meliapore. In the sixteenth century, the number of the Christians residing in the Malabar country was computed at nearly thirty thousand families, but since the arrival of the English they seem to have greatly decreased.

In the seventeenth century, these Nestorians of India appear to have withdrawn themselves from the communion of the Patriarch of Baghdad, obtaining their bishops from the Syrian Pontiff of Mardin.

To the north-east of Persia extend the widely-spread plains of Tartary, which, from the earliest ages, were inhabited by wandering tribes, who maintain, even to this day, the habits of a pastoral and nomadic race. The first remarkable notice of these warlike shepherds occurs in the thirteenth century of the Christian era. The first chieftain who possessed sufficient influence to cement together the various conflicting hordes was Chengis, or Gengis Khan. Before his time, the *Tartars* lived in subjection to the monarchs of Cathay, or

China, and are spoken of by Bar Hebræus as a race whose savage and uncivilized habits provoked the disgust of their cotemporaries. Their clothing was composed of the skins of wolves and of dogs, and they fed greedily on the carrion of dead animals. Their leader was distinguished by an iron stirrup borne before him, which served as a standard in their numerous predatory expeditions.

The religion of this wild people seems to have resembled the rude and baseless superstitions of the early Turcomans. They professed to believe in a God, but they paid him neither honor nor worship, while they received with avidity the predictions and advice of certain kami, or soothsayers, whose credit was, however, destroyed by the contrivance of Gengis Khan. Having understood that the Chinese possessed magnificent idols, and priests of uncommon wisdom, he sent an embassy to request that some of the latter might be sent him, promising to treat them with great honor. When they arrived, he ordered the kami to hold a public disputation with the new comers on the subject of religion ; but the ignorant soothsayers were soon silenced by their more able antagonists, who reinforced their arguments by reading copious extracts from a ritual which they entitled Num. With the illiterate, the affectation of learning is frequently sufficient to convince or to persuade, and the kami retreated from the arena pursued by the sneers and ridicule of their late admirers. In this manner, the doctrines of Budh appear, for the first time, to have been introduced among the Tartars.

The first great exploit of Gengis was his successful war with Unch Khan, a Tartar prince, who is supposed to be the same as the person commonly known by the appellation of Prester, or Presbyter John. From the epistle addressed by the latter to the Emperor of Constantinople, there seems reason to believe that many Tartar chiefs had embraced the Christian faith, and given protection and encouragement to the labors of the Nestorian missionaries. Yet the polygamy of Prester John and his intolerable pride appear contradictory to any form of Christianity, and not a few learned men have considered the whole epistle an ingenious fraud.

Gengis Khan, having assembled around him a large number of vassals, resolved to demand in marriage the daughter of Unch Khan. The latter received the envoy with indignant pride, and answered that he could better endure the

death of his daughter than see her united to a slave. Enraged at this uncourteous message, Gengis assembled his forces, and a battle ensued, in which Unch Khan was defeated and slain.

The indifference of the princes of the house of Gengis to their own superstitions seems to have induced them to lend a ready ear to the teaching of the Nestorians. John of Monte Corvino, who visited Tartary in the fourteenth century, mentions the chief of a country called Cambaliech, who was converted by him from the Nestorian errors, to which his brothers and family continued devotedly attached. A Nestorian monk of the name of Babban was the confessor and privy councilor of the daughter of Unch Khan after her marriage to Gengis. The character of this person, however, does not appear to have reflected much credit upon his religion. A European traveler describes him as deceiving the Tartars by pretended gifts of divination, and as practicing the petty arts of a merchant and a usurer.

An Armenian noble, in the thirteenth century, gives the following curious account of the Christians in the Tartar dominions: "Five years after that the Tartars raised to the throne the younger khan, they could scarcely be gathered together in one place, for some of them were in India, others in the land of Katha, in Russia, in the land of Chasqur, and in Tangarth. This last is the country from which the three kings came to Bethlehem to adore Christ, and the men of that land are also Christians. I was, on one occasion, in several of their churches, where I saw pictures of Jesus Christ and of the three kings, one offering gold, another frankincense, and a third myrrh. The inhabitants received the Christian faith from these three kings, and by them the Cham and his nobles have been made Christians. They have churches near his gates, in which they ring bells and beat boards* to show that those who are going in to the khan ought first to enter the church and salute the Lord Jesus. We found many Christians scattered over the regions of the East, and many large, handsome, and spacious churches which had been destroyed by the Tartars. The khan treated the followers of Christ with great honor and respect."

* Few of the Eastern churches are allowed to use bells. They supply their places by beating a board.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Nestorian metropolitans were dispatched to Tartary; and it is not improbable that some vestiges of Christianity may yet be lingering in the cities of that vast and unexplored region. Still, we may doubt, upon the whole, whether the Nestorian missions effected any real and permanent good. The versatile character of the Tartars often induced them to patronize the Nestorian missionaries, and even to hold out hopes of conversion, which were greedily seized upon, and industriously circulated. Yet impartial travelers have recorded that the missionaries not unfrequently disgraced their sacred character by pandering to the vices and superstitions of the ignorant people they came to reclaim. They boasted of their skill in divination, and asked a blessing on the vast goblets whose intoxicating contents the wine-loving barbarians drained at a single draught. Polygamy seems to have been permitted to the real or imaginary converts, as attested by the Epistle of Prester John; nor does the Christian faith appear to have made any solid impression on the minds of the Tartars.

The kingdom of Cathay seems to have comprised the more northern regions of the Chinese Empire, whose present capital is Peking, the Cambalu of the older travelers. At the close of the seventh century, it contained a large number of Christian inhabitants, who were under the spiritual guidance of Nestorian teachers. In the seventeenth century, a monument was discovered near the city of Segan-fu, which contained many curious particulars with regard to the early introduction of Christianity into China. The stone in question bore the figure of the cross engraved at the top, beneath which were inscriptions in Chinese and Syriac. The date of its erection is given as A. D. 781, and it records the names of those who had preached Christianity in China from the year 636.

The first section of the inscription contains a disquisition on the Trinity in Unity. It represents God as having created all things from nothing, and as forming man endowed with original righteousness, to whose charge and dominion all human things have been subjected. It is worthy of remark that, in this portion of the inscription, the Syriac word *Oloho* is used in Chinese characters to express the Supreme Being.

Section 2 relates to the fall of Adam, and the various errors

of his descendants, who, adoring the creature in the place of the Creator, are said to have been divided into sixty-five sects.

Section 3 treats of the incarnation, nativity, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; it notices, also, the books of the Old and New Testaments, the nature of baptism, the veneration due to the cross, and the necessity of worshipping towards the East.

Section 4 contains remarks on the preaching of the apostles, on the sacred vestments used by Christians, on their civil habits and manners. It mentions the beard worn by ecclesiastics, the tonsure, fasting, and the seven daily hours of prayer.

Section 5 records the preaching the Christian religion in the regions of China by Olopuen, who is described as a native of Ta Sin, or Syria. He enters China in the reign of Tai Sum, and his religion receives the royal approval; the emperor causes a church to be built, and assigns Olopuen twenty-one attendants. The Olopuen of the inscription is supposed to be the Nestorian missionary Jaballaha.

Section 6. A description of Ta Sin, or Syria.

Section 7. A relation of the progress of Christianity during the reign of Cao Sum. The emperor being by no means degenerate from the virtues of his father, intends to continue the designs of the latter; he charges that churches should be erected in all the provinces, and honors Olopuen with the title of Bishop of the Great Law which governs the kingdom of China. The law of God is spoken of as promulgated through the ten provinces, and the multitude of churches and of congregations is alluded to.

Section 8 treats of the persecution of the Christians from A. D. 699 to A. D. 713, by the Bonzes in the province of Honan.

In section 9, and the twelve following, we find a history of the progress, persecutions, and successes of Christianity from A. D. 719 to A. D. 782.

That this tablet contains a true history of the efforts of the Nestorian missionaries during the above-mentioned periods seems beyond the possibility of doubt. It is probable that Christianity prevailed in the northern parts of China until the subjugation of the Chinese dynasties by Gengis Khan, and that Unch Khan, or Prester John, was the last of these *native princes*. Whether, however, the Chinese sovereigns

embraced the Gospel, or merely encouraged and protected its professors, may be regarded as an unsettled point. That many conversions were made is certain, but the missionaries seem to have been too little desirous of maintaining the purity of religion uncorrupted. They have been accused of allowing polygamy to the converts of rank, of overlooking many of their excesses, and of persecuting the Latin missionaries who penetrated into China at the commencement of the fourteenth century.

Nor does it seem easy to account for the fact of the sudden disappearance of Christianity in China, except we admit, as candor compels us, that its first promulgation was accompanied by many defects, and even positive errors, on the part of those who first announced it to the Chinese. Yet to mar that which should be perfect by faults proceeding from human imperfection is a law of human action, whose operation is witnessed too frequently to excite in a reasonable mind either indignation or surprise. The frailty of our common nature renders it more easy to point out the defects of others than to recognize or amend our own, and it is always less difficult to censure than to imitate, even in its imperfection, a noble and virtuous undertaking.

The expulsion of the Tartar emperors in the fourteenth century, and the restoration of the dynasty of the Mim family, seem to have caused the ruin of Christianity in China. In A. D. 1517, the Portuguese merchants at Canton could discover no person who professed himself a Christian, though they often met with crosses and other relics of the Nestorian and Latin missionaries. In fact, the very name of our faith seemed to have been abolished; and it was only the discovery of the monument before alluded to that could induce the Europeans to believe that there had ever been Christians in China.

At the commencement of the seventeenth century, a Jew of Cai-fum-fu informed the Jesuit missionary Ricci that, sixty years before, a large number of Christians occupied the northern provinces of China, who were called, in the language of the country, "the Adorers of the Cross." By the ill offices of the Mohammedans, the suspicions of the government were excited against them, and a severe persecution commenced, which led many to embrace Judaism and the creed of Islam. Their churches were either destroyed or

turned into private houses, and they were induced, from fear of the magistrates, to conceal their origin and former faith. Ricci afterwards traveled to the region indicated by the Jew; but he could obtain no satisfaction from his inquiries or researches: and this report, which, however, seems to bear the marks of probability on its surface, is the last tidings that have been obtained of the once extensive and flourishing Chinese Nestorian Church.

The position of the Nestorians of Assyria under the Tartar successors of the Caliphs appears to have been as favorable as they could desire. The mother of Hulaku Khan was well disposed towards the Christians, who even considered her a second Helena. In 1248, messengers came from Kyokay Khan to St. Louis, to treat about an alliance against the Saracens. In his letters, the khan alludes to himself as a Christian, and professes that he regards with equal favor the Armenians, the Jacobites, and the Nestorians. In 1258 A.D., the Tartars captured Baghdad, and destroyed the power of the Caliphs. One of the wives of their leaders Hulaku is said to have been a Christian, and by her influence the Saracen mosques were shut up, or converted into churches, while the Mohammedans suffered some persecution, and were afraid to appear in public.

After the death of Hulaku, his son and successor Huolon entered into alliances with the Christian monarchs of Georgia and Armenia, and planned, in conjunction with them, an expedition to the Holy Land, which design, however, was frustrated by his death. During the following reign, a tumult was excited at Baghdad by the report that the Nestorian patriarch had caused a renegado from Christianity to Mohammedanism to be drowned in the Tigris. He denied the accusation strenuously, but was obliged to fly to Arbela in order to escape the violence of the populace. His successor was Jaballaha, a man of exemplary piety, who sent a confession of his faith to the reigning pontiff, Nicholas IV.

Under Bayid, the grandson of Hulaku, the Nestorians received much favor and assistance. The monarch was wise, chaste, and temperate, and it was even said that he had secretly embraced the Christian faith. His favor to the Nestorians awakened the jealousy of the Mohammedans, who intrigued against him secretly with a Tartar chief named *Casan* or *Kazan*. The latter, affecting great zeal for the

Koran, was joined by a large number of the Moslems, by the aid of whom he put Bayid to death, and mounted his throne. He did not, however, keep the promises which he had made to his allies, but soon began to favor the Christians, though he permitted, at first, a severe persecution against them.

The successor of Casan had been educated by his mother in the Christian faith, and had even received the sacrament of baptism; but after his accession he apostatized to the Mohammedan tenets, although he does not appear to have molested his Christian subjects.

In the fourteenth century, Tamerlane overran Chaldea, Assyria, and Mesopotamia, captured the city of Baghdad, and treated the Christians with savage cruelty. On one occasion, however, the heart of a conqueror was softened by an act of heroic self-devotion. The Tartars had besieged the fortress of Ardua, and menaced un pitying slaughter to its defenders. Fearful of the result of the siege, an aged bishop, by name Behnam, issued forth, alone and unarmed, to entreat the mercy of the besiegers. Throwing himself at the feet of their general, he implored them to accept his life as a ransom for the devoted garrison. The son of Tamerlane was moved; he bestowed upon the aged suppliant a handkerchief as a token of protection; and withdrew his forces from the fortress to the attack of some less favored city.

Nothing of importance occurs in the history of the Nestorians until the sixteenth century, when a formidable schism broke out amongst them. About a hundred years before, a patriarch, whose name was Simon or Shimon, had introduced a custom whereby the patriarchal dignity was to remain in his family as an hereditary honor. This must have occurred shortly after the removal of the patriarchate from Baghdad to Mosul, during the troubles occasioned by the invasion of Tamerlane. At that time, the Nestorians were in a most depressed condition; and such an arrangement was doubtless deemed necessary in order to secure and regulate the succession. For some years, this custom continued without opposition; but, in 1551, the patriarchal line was represented by a single individual, entitled Simeon Bar Mama, whose haughtiness and love of innovation had aroused against him a great number of the Nestorian clergy.

The Bishops of Amida, Nisibis, Mardin, Arbela, and other places, assembled at Mosul in council, overlooked the pre-

tensions of Bar Mama, and elected John Sulaka or Siud, a monk of Rabban Hormuzd, to fill the patriarchal throne. A still larger faction seems to have supported the cause of Bar Mama, who appears to have prevailed over his rival, maintaining his claim to the patriarchate successfully. Sulaka then repaired to Rome, ostensibly to seek for consecration, but really to enlist the pope's influence in his favor. He was well received, and obtained the object of his wishes by a specious and acceptable confession of faith, whereupon, returning to the East, he fixed the seat of the patriarchate at Amida, which has since continued the head quarters of the Romish Chaldeans. It is asserted, though perhaps not on the most trustworthy authority, that, soon after his return, Bar Mama obtained, by his influence with the Turks, the destruction of his rival.

After this event, the Nestorian Church seems to have been divided into three sections, at the head of which appear the Patriarchs of Amida, Mosul, and Gelu. Of these, the former had from the commencement considered themselves the faithful vassals of Rome, and were regarded as the chiefs of the papal Chaldeans. In A. D. 1580, the Metropolitan of Gelu revolted from the jurisdiction of Elias of Mosul, and got himself appointed Patriarch of the Kurdish and Persian Chaldeans at Rome. His successors, however, seem afterwards to have thrown off the papal authority, and to have maintained their independence among the mountains of Kurdistan.

In A. D. 1622, the missionaries of the Carmelite and Capucin orders appeared in Assyria, and commenced vigorously their operations among the Nestorians. Many were induced to yield a nominal and hollow obedience, and, in 1629, the Patriarch Elias of Mosul sent a profession of submission to the pope, which doubtless exercised some influence over those who adhered still to the doctrines of Nestorius.

At the period of our visit, the term Nestorian might have been confined to the mountaineers of Kurdistan, and the inhabitants of the Persian city of Owromiah. They still resist with great firmness the intrusion of any Roman missionary; but their numbers are rapidly decreasing, and soon the descendants of those whose spiritual jurisdiction extended over some of the most populous and flourishing countries of Asia will probably be reduced to a small and insignificant sect, *whose numbers may be computed by individuals.*



The surviving Nestorians still hold in words the same creed which was promulgated by Bar Sumas and his followers, though it may be doubted whether they enter into or comprehend its subtilties. But the whole of both clergy and laity are so deeply immersed in ignorance that they are scarcely capable of defending or explaining their doctrines. The American independent missionaries have established schools among them at Ouromiah, which are, I believe, well attended.

In concluding these remarks, I cannot but hope that some measures may be taken by the English government to procure the restoration of this poor and persecuted race to the mountain homes from which they were so barbarously driven. Whatever their theological errors may be, and I have endeavored neither to extenuate nor defend them, the people themselves are deeply deserving of our sympathy and pity. Suffering for the sake of Christianity, they have a right to claim the support of a Christian nation, and of a church that, with all her failings, has never shown herself willing to trample on or slight the destitute and oppressed.



CHAPTER XXVI.

The magician. The mollah. Kas Botros' tale. Bishop Matti. General observations.

As I was sitting, one evening, in my house at Mosul, endeavoring to extract some warmth from the wood fire which blazed before me, the servant announced an individual of singular appearance, who, he said, wished to have some conversation with me. I bade my new visitor be seated, and handed him a pipe, while, during the customary salutations, I took a short survey of his figure and habiliments. He was a man of middle age, with a wild, haggard countenance, and dull, glassy eye, which, when seated, he fixed intently on one corner of the ceiling, and never took them off until his departure. I was wondering what he could have to say to me, but, after a short pause, he inquired abruptly, "Do you not know me? I am a friend to the djin" (genii).

I now recollected that I had seen him exhibit some conjuring tricks at one of the houses in Mosul, and, after acknowledging the acquaintance, I asked what his business might be. He seemed scarcely to notice my question, but, after a little while, he said, "Should you like to see the djin?"

"What do they resemble, O man?" I inquired. "Are they very frightful?"

"On my head, no," he answered. "They are very handsome and comely, and there are those among them who are like the houries, which our Prophet—may he enjoy happiness!—promised to the true believers in Paradise. Doubtless you wonder that I should ask you if you would see them, but you will not be surprised when you hear the reason. Know, then, that the djin do not dress as the Easterns do; they are not habited in turbans, zeboons, and flowing abbas, but they appear in short coats of cloth, in pantour,* and in hats."

"Hats, do you say?" I exclaimed.

"Upon my head, hats," he replied; "and, from the similarity of dress, I presumed there might be some connection between them and the Ingleez, the more particularly as your people are always digging for treasures, which every child knows are under the special guardianship of the djin. Thinking, therefore, that you might like to see them, I have brought a form of incantation, which, if you like, I will sell you for a few piastres."

I took the paper he offered me, and found it was composed of a number of Arabic words, which to me were perfectly unintelligible, written round a kind of circle divided into four compartments, each of which was inscribed with the name of an angel.

"How is this to be used?" I inquired.

"You must draw a circle on the floor at midnight," he said, "with the blood of a black cock. You must then place within it four vessels of incense towards the four corners of the earth. When these rites have been duly performed, light the incense, and begin to read from the paper. The genii will then appear on every side of you, and, it may be, will tempt you to step out of the circle, which you must on no account do, or you will be torn in pieces by them. As long as you remain within, ask any questions you choose, and

* Pantaloons.



they must answer. Nay, should you command them to show you the palaces of Nimroud the Accursed, they are bound to obey."

Feeling, however, in nowise inclined to figure in a *Der Freyschutz* scene of this kind, I returned him his paper, and addressed him on the folly and wickedness of his pretensions. He still persisted, however, that he was in league with the *djin*; nor could he see any impropriety in practicing an art which had always been tolerated by *El Islam*. Finding, at last, that I declined purchasing his wares, he took his departure. What struck me as most singular in this interview was his assertion that the *genii* resembled in their appearance the natives of Europe. The same thing, however, was told me by a heathen in India respecting the evil spirits who were supposed to haunt a wood in the neighborhood of his village. They appeared, he said, in English dresses, used English oaths, and were carried about in palanquins. This differs greatly from our common notion of the supernatural world, according to which we are accustomed to depict immortal forms as resembling Orientals, and clothed in all the flowing drapery of the East.

The next day I received a visitor of a very different description. He was a *mollah*, from a neighboring mosque, who had often obtained from us small pamphlets in Arabic on moral subjects. The contents of these books he was wont to transfer to his Friday sermon, omitting carefully, of course, any allusions to Christianity which they might contain. The *mollah* had great hopes of the English, because he found that they did not venerate images, and he seemed not to despair of effecting my conversion. We, therefore, entered sometimes into long arguments on the truth of Islamism, but generally ended where we began. My antagonist was, however, more mild and temperate than many of his brethren; he professed to repudiate persecution, and asserted that the sensual descriptions of paradise contained in the *Koran* were to be understood figuratively, and by no means according to the letter. He showed some logical skill in defending the Mohammedan view of the Unity, but failed in making out the authenticity and genuineness of the *Koran*.

After his departure, my servant Yusef, whom I had taken lately in the place of Toma, began to abuse the *mollah*. "Do not trust his fine words and his fair professions, O my

master," said he. "This mollah, like the rest, is a wolf with the skin of a sheep. Have I not heard him rail against Christians, and swear that we ought to be exterminated? You hear him now; he is mild and gentle; but stand behind him when he is with the cadi and mufti, and verily you will have a different tone. We Christians know these dogs of old. When Franks are before them, all is smiles and civility; the poor Christian is then their brother and their friend; but when the stranger is gone, it is nothing but kicks, and cuffs, and 'Out of my way, you Nazarene dog!' Do I not know by experience these unclean Kafirs?"

My friend Kas Botros has already been mentioned in these pages as a good relator of stories, an accomplishment which drew around him every evening a large and attentive circle of auditors. Frequently, when I have shared the hospitality of his roof, I have heard a grave discussion wound up by a pertinent anecdote or an amusing tale. On one occasion, he had been remarking the importance of choosing fit persons to perform difficult commissions, and ended his discourse by the usual question, "Shall I tell you a tale?" to which, having assented, he began.

"There was once in Baghdad a Sultan who was so great a patron of ingenuity that he readily forgave all inconveniences which it might occasion him. His doors were never closed against the ready-witted or the eccentric, and, provided their sayings and doings entertained him, he was by no means niggardly in rewarding them. The clumsy jester, however, or the witless narrator generally suffered in proportion to his presumption, for the royal critic contented himself not with mere satire or censure, but made his soles sore with the bastinado. Thus, while success elevated the fortunate to the seventh heaven, those who failed were thrust down to Gehennam, and from the royal judgment there was no appeal. Boys ran after the unfortunates in the streets, and shouted 'There go the disappointed buffoons!'

"In the same city, lived a fisherman named Abd el Aziz, whose poverty-stricken habitation was never visited by prosperity. Day after day he toiled to procure for himself a bare subsistence, and though he succeeded in warding off starvation, he never earned enough to repel the necessity for labor. This state of things grieved Abd el Aziz, who was by no means partial to work.

“One day, as he was returning mournfully from the Tigris with empty nets, he espied a man, habited in rich robes, riding a gayly-caparisoned steed. A large multitude followed him with acclamations, and the curiosity of the fisherman being excited, he asked who it was. A passer-by informed him that the fortunate horseman had just furnished a most witty answer to one of the Sultan’s very difficult riddles, and had obtained all this honor in consequence. The unfortunate fisherman sighed as he thought of the difference between the circumstances of the answerer and his own, and he strode moodily home to his wife, Aisha, who expected to see him return with a net full of fish. Her disappointed looks may well be conceived when she saw the empty nets; and being, like most females of her class, somewhat of a shrew, she did not spare her husband, but poured forth with great volubility an angry harangue, the terms of which might somewhat astonish those of you Franks who represent the women of the East as the meek, gentle, and unresisting slaves of man.

“The poor fisherman listened in silence to the reproaches which were so liberally showered upon him, for he knew that remonstrance would only increase wrath. He sat for some time without making any reply, but at last, starting up with the air of one who has formed a desperate resolution, said, ‘I will go to the presence of the Sultan, and try what fortune will befall me there.’

“‘Are you mad?’ inquired his wife. ‘Shall a man who has not wit enough to catch fish hope to succeed in an undertaking wherein so many wiser heads have failed? Are you our Lord Suleiman, O man, that you should aspire to answer the riddles of the Sultan? Truly you will return with sore soles and a broken heart, if you thus presume.’

“‘Woman,’ said the fisherman, ‘your clamors would deprive even Lokman of sense. Happen what may, I can scarcely encounter severer strokes than those your tongue gives me. Speak no more, therefore, but let me go my way in peace. If it is written that I die, it is useless to attempt avoiding the stroke of fate.’

“Aisha repented of her ill humor, and gave vent to a flood of tears. Much as she scolded her husband occasionally, she really loved him at the bottom, and when she saw him going forth in moody silence, she could not conceal her apprehension that something evil would happen. The fisher-

man, however, took no notice of her entreaties and tears. He walked briskly along, and soon arrived at the gate of the mosque, where the people of his district assembled for the Friday prayers. A poor, ragged devotee, with a long, gray beard, was seated near the gate, rocking his body to and fro, and reciting, in a nasal chant, the words of the Koran which enjoin the sacred duty of almsgiving. Abd el Aziz felt in the pocket of his gown, and with some difficulty discovered a para.

“‘I may be going to my death,’ thought he, ‘and an act of charity will render my passage more easy over the bridge that leadeth to paradise.’ He gave the money to the devotee, and requested the benefit of his prayers.

“‘May Allah and the Prophet help your enterprise, my son, whatever it may be!’ said the old man, as he received the gift.

“‘The fisherman felt his spirits grow lighter as he moved on, and, for the first time, a ray of hope shot across his mind. Arrived at the gate of the palace, he desired to be admitted into the presence of the king.

“‘Look to your head and your heels, my friend,’ said the porter; ‘those who please not our lord seldom come off with both scatheless.’

“‘He admitted him, however, and in a few minutes the fisherman stood before the Sultan, who was sitting down to dinner with his wuzeer, his favorite Sultana, and his two sons. When his majesty understood the name and errand of his guest, he pointed to a roast fowl which had just been brought in, and bade him make a proper division of the several parts to each member of the company. A large knife was then placed into the hands of Abd el Aziz, with which he cut off the head, the breast, the wings, and the legs of the bird. Then, kneeling respectfully to the Sultan, he presented him gravely with the head, saying, ‘Let the head go to him who is, under Allah, head over all.’ Taking the breast, he offered it to the Sultana, and said, ‘The breast to her who is the breast of the king.’ Giving the wings to the minister, he said, ‘Let the wings go to him who supports the Sultan, and by whose wise counsels the monarch directs his course.’ The legs he presented to the king’s sons, with the remark, ‘The legs of a king are a brave, healthy, and affectionate offspring.’

“‘But there remains yet the body of the fowl, O Abd el Aziz,’ observed the Sultan. ‘To whom shall that be given?’”

“‘To myself, O king,’ was the reply; ‘for are not the subjects of a monarch those who nourish him, his sons, and his ministers? Are we not, also, the back that always bears burdens?’”

“‘You have accomplished your task well, and have deserved my approbation,’ said the Sultan. ‘Henceforth your face is white before me. Slaves, escort Abd el Aziz to his house, give him a horse, a dress of honor, and fifty pieces of gold.’”

“The king’s orders were instantly obeyed, and Aisha could scarcely credit the evidence of her senses when she saw her husband riding along like an emir, with a splendid robe, and attended by attendants richly dressed. The gratification was still further increased when he showed her the money which he had received from the Sultan.

“Abd el Aziz went to his rest that evening a happy man; but, as prosperity had not made him idle, he departed, as usual, the next morning to his customary occupation. Aisha, however, was soon beset by a numerous crowd of her female acquaintances, who were speedily put in possession of everything that had occurred. Among them was a sour, discontented woman, whose name was Fatima, and whose husband exercised the calling of a cobbler near the house of the fisherman. This person returned home in an ill humor, and began to inveigh bitterly against the stupidity of her helpmate.

“‘Is it well, O Father of Sloth,’ said she, ‘that you sit here from day to day mending old papouches, while your neighbor finds gold in the streets? Have you no brains, O man, that you cannot invent smart replies? or is your tongue cut out, that you cannot utter them? Upon my head, you have no more ingenuity than the donkey of an Arab.’”

“Now the cobbler had no small opinion of his own abilities, and he was by no means pleased with these reproaches of his wife. However, he determined first to discover the cause of her anger, which he soon found out was the unexpected prosperity of Abd el Aziz. The discovery excited his envy and indignation also, for the honest fisherman had always been an object of contempt to him. He bade his wife be silent, and assured her that he would at once go to the palace, and doubted not that he should return with a

present double in value to that which his neighbor had obtained. He immediately left his work, and went in search of Abd el Aziz, from whom he obtained an account of his interview with the Sultan. Thinking himself now fully prepared for the task which he had undertaken, the cobbler lost no time in presenting himself before the Sultan.

“After saluting the monarch in the usual way, he explained that, hearing of his neighbor’s good fortune, he had ventured to solicit that he might be accorded a similar trial of his abilities. The Sultan replied that he accepted the proposal, and commanded a fowl to be brought, which he bade the cobbler show his skill in dividing. Now the latter was determined to pay the Sultan a greater compliment than his neighbor had done; so he said, ‘O king, take thou the whole, for no one else is worthy of sharing with thee.’

“But the Sultan replied, with a frown, ‘Shall then my wife, my sons, and my minister go without anything?’

“‘Surely, O my lord,’ said the cobbler; ‘for whose dogs are they that they should be partakers in the portion of him who is as the shadow of Allah upon earth?’

“Then the Sultan grew wroth, and said, ‘O Father of Bears, from what Arab or Kurd didst thou learn these manners, or from whence hast thou derived the impudence to suppose that I resemble thee in thy ill-breeding? Am I a wild beast, that I should feed alone like a lion in his den, or like the tiger who drinketh in his solitude the blood of the traveler? But I will give thee some lessons in politeness which will enlighten thy stupidity; and that thou mayest remember them, behold, thou shalt eat fifty sticks.’

“The Sultan then, with his own hand, divided the bird among those who sat near him, reserving none for himself, while the cobbler received the fifty blows as his share of the repast, and limped home, amid the sneers and ridicule of the people. Thus we see that success in a matter depends upon the management of him who undertakes it.”

When I returned home, I found that Bishop Matti, the Syrian Jacobite whom we met at the monastery of Zaphran, had arrived on a special mission from the patriarch, and was expected to celebrate a special service at the principal Syrian church. My friend B—— and myself were invited to attend, and were accommodated with seats within the large recess, *which is termed the Holy of Holies*, and which was separated

by a large curtain from the nave of the church. At first this curtain was drawn up, and some preliminary ceremonies commenced.

The bishop was seated in an arm-chair, holding a cross in his hand, while four stout Syrian deacons lifted him on their shoulders, and paraded him round the church. The procession, however, was anything but dignified, as the crowd was very great, and every one endeavored to get near the chair. The poor bishop was borne to and fro by his supporters, evidently in great peril of falling out of his seat, while the choir sang, or rather shouted, a hymn, and accompanied their voices with the clashing of several pairs of cymbals, which are the only species of instrumental music tolerated in the Syrian Church. When the procession was over, the bishop mounted the altar, the curtain was let down, and the Liturgy proceeded more quietly, though the mode in which the responses were made would rather have scandalized an English audience. Yet I saw a great many among the worshippers whose devotion seemed evidently heartfelt and sincere; and, doubtless, could the Syrians have been present at one of our churches, they would have been equally astonished to find that a people who profess to entertain so much more pure and untainted religious feeling than all other nations, invariably sit or loll when they are offering up their prayers.

Most persons form a most extravagant estimate of the cleanliness of Orientals in general, because they have heard or read that the East is the land of the bath; and yet nothing can be more filthy than the habits of the great mass of the people. Those who hear of their visits to the bath should be told also that they rarely wash themselves at any other time than the hours of prayer, when a little water is poured over the hands and arms, and a wet thumb inserted in the orifice of each ear. Among the middle classes, few take the bath oftener than once a month, and, with the exception of the ritual purifications I have alluded to, which amount to very little, this may be considered the only real cleansing which most Orientals undergo. The visit to the bath is therefore made a matter of some importance, and the day on which it occurs is marked out as a holiday. When the cleansing has taken place, the Eastern wraps himself luxu-

riously in clean towels, and discusses the news of the neighborhood over pipes and coffee.

At one o'clock in the day, the males take their departure, and the women use the building till sunset. The bath supplies the same source of recreation to an Eastern lady that balls and parties do to their European sisters. Here each khatoun* meets her female friends, discusses scandal and fashions, and deploras the jealousy or inconstancy of her husband. Sometimes curiosity leads a European lady to the bath, which she has no sooner entered than a loquacious and inquisitive crowd surrounds her. All flock to examine the dress and the appearance of the stranger, and it is well if she is enabled to escape, uninjured in temper or equanimity, from their searching scrutiny.

At home, the Eastern woman is a very child in her language, thoughts, and habits. European ladies have told me of their interrupting the mistress of a Turkish mansion in the agreeable pastime of throwing pillows at her attendants, while sometimes she has been discovered demolishing whole platefuls of sweetmeats. The rank of the husband never relieves the wife from the necessity of superintending the culinary preparations of the household. Even the spouse of a pasha usually cooks her husband's dinner, of which, however, she does not partake.

We often form exaggerated notions of the unhappiness of Turkish women; yet we must remember that what would be considered here a degradation would there be looked upon as a necessary part of female modesty. An Oriental female would deem herself lowered in the opinion of others, and in her own, if she went unveiled, or sat down at the same table with men. The customs, therefore, which impose these restrictions upon her are regarded by her as deductions from the natural rules of right conduct, and are, therefore, not felt as degrading, or even as tyrannical. Were the Oriental female solicited to go about as European ladies do, she would reject the suggestion as a most grievous insult.

One peculiarity in the social parties of the East is the absence of all females. Among the Christians, women sometimes sit down with their husbands and receive their guests, if those guests are Europeans; but this is rarely, if ever,

* Madam, mistress, or lady.

done when the persons invited are Orientals. It is considered also indecent for people of different sexes to be seen together in public, although the closest ties of relationship may exist between them. I shall never forget the unqualified stare of astonishment with which an Eastern lady regarded me when I informed her that in England husbands walked abroad in company with their wives.

An Oriental friend, having entertained the idea of marrying a European, applied to me for information respecting the probable wants and requirements of his future bride in prospect. His countenance lengthened as I enlarged upon the necessity of allowing his wife to mix in society where males were admitted, and of tolerating her going abroad without a veil. After a few moments' thought, however, he said—

"All this, I suppose, is right, according to the customs of the Franks; and, as I must not expect her to change the habits in which she has been educated, I suppose I must consent to her following manners to which, I own, my Eastern mind is repugnant. But is there anything else?"

"Yes," I replied; "you must give her your arm when she has a mind to walk abroad."

"That," he replied, "I will not and cannot do. But is it absolutely necessary?"

"It is," I answered.

"Then the marriage is at an end," observed he, decidedly; "for, were she a *houri* from Paradise, I would never have her on those terms."

The early age at which Easterns generally marry tends to prevent the occurrence of much evil, and acts as a restraint to vicious habits. But a young couple do not, as with us, immediately commence housekeeping on their own account. The newly-wedded pair reside with the father and mother of the husband, and continue in their house sometimes for years. I know of no sight more interesting than that of an aged Oriental, with his long gray beard and venerable aspect, presiding over a whole circle of married sons. It has often brought vividly before me the patriarchs of Holy Writ.

It is a custom in Assyria to call the father by the name of his eldest son. Thus, supposing the appellation of the latter to be Mohammed, the father would be termed Abou Mohammed, the father of Mohammed; and this compound title is often substituted for his proper name. On one occasion, an

old gentleman, entitled Ismail, who was much respected by his neighbors, was so unfortunate as to have no son from whom to derive an honorific appellation. What was to be done? All the neighbors agreed it would be a great shame that so respectable and worthy a man should be called all his life plain Ismail. A mollah was called into consultation, and it was determined, by a species of legal fiction, to designate him Abou Ahmed, the father of Ahmed. He had been known by this name for a year or two, when he married again, and a son was born, to whom, in acknowledgment of the kindness of his neighbors, he gave the name of Ahmed.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Remarks on the Syrian Jacobites.

THE Syrian Jacobites have been alluded to so often, in the course of these pages, that it seems proper to insert a few remarks on their history and peculiar opinions, the more especially as they constitute a considerable portion of the Eastern Christians. Various derivations have been given of the name Jacobite, by which they are generally known. Some writers of this sect have affected to deduce it from the appellation of the Patriarch Jacob, or from that of St. James or Jacobos, the brother of our Lord. The most probable derivation, however, seems to be founded on the supposition that it was an appellative fastened on the followers of Jacobus Baradaeus by the orthodox, about a century and a half after the Council of Chalcedon.

The latter synod was held, A. D. 451, to condemn the opinions of Eutyches, an abbot of Constantinople, who, in his eager detestation of the doctrines of Nestorius, had fallen into the opposite extreme, and pronounced that there was but one nature in Christ. The term itself was comparatively harmless, as it seems to have been used by the Egyptian and Syrian doctors before his time; but, from the language of Eutyches, it appeared that he affixed to it a peculiar sense of his own, and considered the humanity of the Saviour as

swallowed up in his divinity. The condemnation of these opinions by the council gave rise to a new sect, who were sometimes called Monophysites, or holders of the doctrine of the one nature, and sometimes Eutychians, from the name of their founder. Great numbers of the Easterns distinguished themselves by their opposition to the decrees of Chalcedon, and, in the course of twenty years, the new opinions had pervaded Armenia, Pontus, Mesopotamia, Syria, and Egypt.

Towards the close of the fifth century, an attempt was made by the Emperor Zeno to heal the divisions of the church by the publication of the Henoticon or Act of Union, whereby the existence of the Council of Chalcedon was virtually ignored. Of the five great patriarchs of the Christian world, Acacius of Constantinople, Peter Mongus of Alexandria, and Peter Fullo of Antioch, subscribed this decree, which, doubtless, would have finally resulted in the establishment of the Monophysite doctrine in the East. But when the defenders of Chalcedon discovered the probable tendencies of the Henoticon, they began to oppose it warmly, in which they were joined by the ultra Monophysites, whom nothing would content short of the total condemnation of that council and its decrees.*

The Henoticon, though it failed in effecting the union of the different parties in the church, produced a modification of the Eutychian or Monophysite doctrine, which seems to have been first propounded by Xenaïas and Fullo, two of the chief leaders of the Monophysites. They taught, what indeed their followers received and hold at the present day, that in the Son of God there was one nature, which, notwithstanding its unity, was double and compounded. This seeming self-contradictory tenet was adopted, doubtless, to avoid expressing their assent in words to the Council of Chalcedon, while, in point of fact, they admitted in substance the doctrine which it inculcated.

The Emperors Justin and Justinian persecuted the Monophysites with the most unrelenting severity, so that, during the sixth century, their numbers seem to have greatly diminished. The latter emperor seized and imprisoned the principal leaders of the sect, and endeavored to force them to

* Mosheim, lib. i. Cent. IV. Assem., tom. ii. *Dissertatio de Monophysitis*.

give in their adhesion to the Council of Chalcedon. Fearing lest the interests of the community might suffer by their perpetual imprisonment or death, the captive prelates consecrated to the episcopal office an obscure monk, whose name was Jacob Bar Adai, or Baradaeus. Being a man of great energy, and industrious zeal, he went about reviving the drooping hopes of the Monophysites, and eventually succeeded in re-establishing the almost extinct community. He is said, in the course of his travels, to have ordained one hundred thousand priests and deacons, twenty bishops, one archbishop, and two patriarchs, one of whom he established at Alexandria, and the other at Antioch. It is doubtful whether this account may be taken exactly to the letter; but it is certain that Baradaeus may be considered as the second founder and restorer of the Monophysite sect; the Syrian members of which have derived from him the appellation of Jacobites. He ruled the See of Edessa as bishop for thirty-seven years, and died A. D. 578.

During the sixth century, a great and grievous plague seems to have invaded the regions of Asia, occupied chiefly by the Monophysites. An account of this fearful visitation has been transmitted to us by John, who at that time was the chief bishop of the sect in Asia. He prefaces his narration by the declaration that he had received a sort of inquisitorial commission from Justinian to search for the professors of the ancient pagan idolatry, great numbers of whom were concealed in the cities of Asia under the external cloak of conformity to Christianity. Many persons distinguished for their rank and learning were detected among the recusants, one of whom, named Phocas, a man of patrician dignity, when he found himself betrayed to Justinian, swallowed poison, and died. His body was thrown into a pit, and exposed to public view, while the other pagans were ordered to assemble themselves in the Syrian Church, and receive instruction from John in the doctrines of Christianity. The indefatigable prelate records that he traversed with unwearied diligence the regions of Asia, Caira, Lydia, and Phrygia, where he converted and baptized seventy thousand individuals. It seems strange, however, that Justinian, who was known to be most inimical to the Monophysites, should have intrusted such important avocations to one whom he must have considered a perverse and obstinate heretic.

The year following that in which John accomplished his arduous mission, he relates that the city of Cyzicum was visited by an earthquake, while a comet of fearful magnitude appeared in the west. Brazen vessels, manned by headless navigators, were reported to have been discovered at sea, directing their course towards those places which were afterwards visited by the plague. This fearful scourge overran Gaza, Ascalon, the whole region of Palestine, and pursued its course over the countries of Mesopotamia, Cilicia, Mysia, and Bithynia.

In Egypt, a whole city was depopulated by the plague, with the exception of seven men, and a boy of ten years of age. The survivors employed themselves in collecting together the riches of the town, which they gathered into one immense heap; and afterwards the men fell down and expired. The lad, affrighted at what had befallen his companions, left the treasure and fled. He reached the gate in safety, but was there met by a spectral form, who persuaded him to return to the place where he had left his companions. The youth obeyed, and perished.

At another city in the confines of Palestine, the inhabitants were deceived by some evil spirits, who assumed the garb and appearance of angels, and persuaded the people that they should be safe from the plague if they would adore a brazen image to be found in the market-place. The townsmen complied with the insidious suggestion, but soon had reason to repent of their credulity. As soon as they commenced the idolatrous ceremony, a violent storm arose, the wind raised the statue to the height of a thousand cubits in the air, after which it fell with such violence that it was dissolved by the shock to powder, and all the men of the place were instantly seized with the plague and died.

In Antioch itself, sepulchres were wanting for the numerous bodies which required burial. It was said that vessels were thrown from on high upon the earth, filled with vapors, which escaped, and disseminated everywhere the fatal disorder. The villages and towns in the neighborhood were deserted by the superstitious peasantry, who affirmed that evil spirits had been seen traversing the country in the attire of priests and monks, thus casting discredit on the members of the sacred order.

Meanwhile, the plague directed its devastating course

eastwards, in the direction of Amida and Nisibis. Earthquakes prevailed in all parts of Asia, and, to add to the miseries of the time, the Jews and Samaritans broke out into rebellion, and massacred great numbers of the Christians in Palestine. Soon after, the principal cities of Galilee and Phœnicia were much injured by earthquakes, and the sea receded for about two miles from the usual water-mark. Towards the termination of these troubles, a meteor appeared in the air, shaped like a lance, which was quickly followed by the death of the Emperor Justinian.*

After this period, the Monophysites seem to have increased greatly in numbers, though they were from time to time visited by persecutions. An Oriental writer relates that, among other grievances, they were often made to serve as steeds for the Orthodox; and the unfortunate heretic who possessed the unenviable qualification of broad shoulders was frequently obliged to groan beneath the weight of a stout and portly member of the Imperial or Melchite Church. During the seventh and eighth centuries, we find them aiding the Moslem invaders against their Greek oppressors, though by so doing they only exchanged one species of servitude for another. At the commencement of the ninth century, a Syrian bishop presided over a large congregation in the city of Baghdad, which had recently been founded by the Caliph Al Mansoor.

During the ninth century, a question was much agitated between the Syrian and Egyptian Monophysites concerning the propriety of mixing the bread of the eucharist with oil and salt, which occasioned, for a time, the cessation of inter-communion between them. Peace was afterwards restored, and the Syrians have ever since regarded the Copts and Abyssinians as brethren. Towards the end of this period, Moses Bar Cepha was Patriarch of the Jacobites, and published several works which were highly esteemed by the sect. In his Dissertation on Paradise, he advanced an opinion still generally received among the Syrians, that the Garden of Eden, from which Adam was expelled, is still existing, though invisible, and receives the souls of the just and pious, to remain there until the day of the resurrection.

* I have drawn the above statements from the chronicle of the Bishop John. He seems to have been somewhat credulous; but the main facts are corroborated by Theophanes and Procopius.

He was the author of two liturgies, and wrote commentaries on the Syriac Ritual.

In the tenth century, a Jacobite patriarch, named John, was led captive to Constantinople, where he defended the Monophysite doctrine in the presence of the Greek emperor Nicephorus Phocas, and the Patriarch Polyeuctes. His description of his reception at the imperial city is addressed to the Coptic primate Mennas, and contains some curious particulars, a few of which I shall transcribe.

“The Greek emperor commanded that the patriarch should send for us, which order he obeyed, and we waited upon him the Thursday before Palm Sunday, when he received us in the presence of a large body of his clergy. Before we reached his palace, a number of men met us, who endeavored by loud outcries to make us afraid. But God, in consideration of thy acceptable prayers, afforded us both fortitude and patience.

“After some time, we came to the palace of the patriarch, which is a large edifice, surrounded by soldiers and a large crowd of attendants. When we had saluted him, and he had returned our salutation, he inquired, ‘Of what place art thou patriarch?’ We answered, ‘We are Bishop of the See of Antioch.’”

After this, some conversation took place respecting the theological sentiments of the Jacobites, which John avowed boldly, and without disguise. He was then allowed to return, but was subsequently sent for by the emperor, whose proceedings he thus describes:—

“He caused us to enter their great church (Sancta Sophia), and showed us all the ecclesiastical ornaments, the robes, veils, and lamps, with the multitudes of people who flocked daily thither, thinking that we should be moved like children by the sight of these perishable things. Then, after he had communicated, he began to speak harshly to us, accusing us of dividing Christ, and urging against us the saying of Paul, in which he represents one as asserting ‘I am of Cephas, and another I am of Christ.’ To which accusations we were enabled, by God’s help, to make a suitable reply.

“On Easter, the emperor again sent for us, and said, ‘The Moslem and the Jews continually reproach us with our divisions, and point out how some are called Melekites, others Jacobites, and others Nestorians. What, then, is the

cause of the schism between you and ourselves? Let us come together and search the Scriptures for two or three months, and, having found out truth, let us all follow it.' ”

An interview afterwards took place between the Jacobite and the Greek patriarchs, in the course of which, the former reproached the Melekites with holding the opinions of Nestorius, a charge indignantly denied. The epistle concludes with the expression of the writer's steadfast determination to maintain firmly the tenets of the Monophysites, and with a request that he may be aided and supported by the prayers of Mennas.

At the commencement of the eleventh century, John, the son of Abdon, was elected Patriarch of the Jacobites. He was the first who moved the seat of the patriarchate from Antioch to Malatiah, a city of Armenia. Before his election, he lived a solitary life on the Black Mountain, near Antioch, in company with a brother anchorite, who was also named John. The Patriarch Athanasius had, on his deathbed, designated the son of Abdon as his successor, which fact, according to his biographer, was miraculously announced to John in a vision. The modest hermit resolved to decline the intended dignity, and, addressing his friend, he related to him what had occurred, and also his determination to conceal himself from those who were on their way to invest him with rank patriarchal. But the other, who nourished beneath his hermit's gown a spirit of worldliness and ambition, resolved to remain, and to accept the proffered dignity.

The son of Abdon replied, “ I will not submit to bear the burden of worldly honor, nor can I endure to be torn away from this blessed retreat where I have spent so many happy years. But if thou deemest that thou canst support this yoke, remain, and take it on thyself. As for me, I shall seek to conceal myself until this calamity be overpast.”

Having said these words, he fled away, and concealed himself in the recesses of the mountain, leaving his companion to receive the deputation, who, arriving on the following day, found the other John awaiting them, and, supposing him to be the person intended, saluted him patriarch. The ambitious monk gladly accepted the honor, and took his departure in company with the others. But, as they were journeying to Antioch, the sun being very oppressive, they *reposed* for a short time under a tree, the boughs of which

happened to strike the monk on the eyes, and blinded him. Conscience-stricken, he related what had passed between him and the son of Abdon, who was immediately sought for, and installed, against his will, Patriarch of Antioch.

The city of Malatiah, in his day, was a large and flourishing town, containing fifty-six churches and about sixty thousand males, among whom were reckoned a small number of Melekites, who raised great troubles, and finally succeeded in procuring the imprisonment of the Jacobite patriarch. It is now, however, in a semi-ruinous state, owing to the misgovernment of the Turks.

During the following century, Dionysius Bar Salibi occupied the patriarchal throne, a man noted for piety and learning. He composed several works on theological subjects, among which we find a curious disquisition on bells, the invention of which he ascribes to Noah. He mentions that several histories record a command given to that patriarch to strike on the bell with a piece of wood three times a day, in order to summon the workmen to their labor while he was building the ark, and this he seems to consider the origin of church bells, an opinion which, indeed, is common to other Oriental writers.

We find, in the writings of Bar Salibi, a distinct admission of the doctrine of consubstantiation, for he affirms that the body and blood of Christ in the eucharist were the same that were born of the Blessed Virgin; and this opinion seems still to be entertained by many of the later Syrians, although they do not admit the Roman definition of the change of substance. In another place, he illustrates the union of the body and blood of the Redeemer to the elements, by the example of the junction of fire and iron in a red hot bar.

In the thirteenth century, flourished the learned Gregorius Bar Hebræus, a most voluminous writer in Arabic and Syriac, who obtained from the Mohammedans the appellation of Abou'l Farraj, which has been Latinized into Abulpharagius. He was born in the city of Malatiah, and his father seems to have been a Jewish convert, from which circumstance he derived the name of Bar Hebrai, the son of the Hebrew. In A. D. 1243, the Tartars invaded the territory of Malatiah, and laid siege to the city; but their assault was warded off by the prudence and courage of the Syrian archbishop, who, assembling the citizens, exhorted them to

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repel the assailants. In the following year, he repaired to Antioch, where he devoted himself to his life. From thence, after a short time, he went to a place where he was ordained priest and bishop by the Jacobite patriarch. In A. D. 1264, he was raised to the high dignity of Primate of the East, which he held for two years. As the Jacobites had found it necessary, in consequence of the incursions of the Tartars, to fix his abode in Syria, and to delegate the affairs of the East to a Maphrian, who was termed the maphrian, or primate, his chief residence at Mosul. Bar Hebræus found his office, however, full of trouble and anxiety. The attacks of the barbarians had alarmed and impoverished the country. Great numbers had taken flight, while those who remained were in daily fear that their property might be seized and their towns and villages destroyed. Much discord had arisen from the discord between the Nestorians and Jacobites, the former frequently making use of their influence with the Caliphs and the Tartar sovereigns to oppress their co-religionists. By his prudent and forbearing measures, however, the new maphrian succeeded in winning the favor of Hulaku Khan, and of his Christian consort, and of conciliating the esteem of the Nestorian catholicos. When Bar Hebræus visited Baghdad, the latter dispatched his nephew, and some of the principal men of the city, to meet his brother of Mosul, and escort him into the city of peace. For the first time since the division of the sects, Nestorians and Jacobites joined together in celebrating the solemn rites of Easter.

The maphrian returned soon after to Mosul, where, however, he remained but a short time, as the condition of his community required his continual oversight. Indefatigable in his exertions, he passed from place to place, ordaining bishops and priests, rebuilding ruined churches, and obtaining from the Tartar monarchs fresh privileges for his sect. When, at the decease of the patriarch, he was accused of aspiring to this high station, the maphrian of the East could reply with pardonable pride that he coveted no higher honor than that which he already possessed, of enjoying the fruits of a calm and tranquillity which his own exertions had obtained for his extensive diocese.

In his sixtieth year, this great and excellent man felt a presentiment that his last hour was drawing nigh. By the persuasion of his friends, he had translated his Chronicle, one of the most valuable works in Oriental literature, from the Syriac into the Arabic language. Soon after he had finished his labors, he was seized with a fever, for which he refused to receive medical treatment, saying that he was sensible that the end of his life was at hand. With the calm composure of a Christian, he called for his papers, and dictated to his weeping secretary several important instructions. He then received the eucharist, and, charging the survivors to remain in love and charity with each other, the Maphrian of the East breathed his last.

Mar Jaballaha, the Catholicos of the Nestorians, had no sooner heard of his decease than he hastened to pay the last honors to one whose character, notwithstanding their difference in creed, he could not but respect and esteem. Nestorians, Armenians, Greeks, and Jacobites united in forming the mournful procession which accompanied to the grave the corpse of the deceased maphrian; a solemn funeral service was performed by each; and even the Mohammedans paid a decent tribute to the memory of a man whose writings had enriched the literature of their country, and handed down to posterity the actions of their most renowned Caliphs.

The prolific genius of Bar Hebræus displayed itself in the various subjects which he treated. Among his writings, we find treatises on logic, astronomy, and physics; in grammar, history, poetry, and theology, he was equally celebrated; while the most learned doctors of Arabia acknowledged that in ethics and the abstruse sciences his dictum was equal to that of Aristotle himself. The disciples, who bewailed his departure, spoke of him in terms of affectionate praise as a glorious and shining lamp, and as the strong and stately pillar which had hitherto sustained the weak and trembling fabric of Jacobism.

The charity of the deceased maphrian shone no less brightly than his intellectual acquirements and his other moral virtues. The friend and favorite of princes, he delighted to live in a small apartment, where he was accessible to the meanest of his flock. Money he so much despised that he distributed to the poor nearly the whole of his annual income, reserving only so much as was needed for the necessities of life. The

members of his flock strove, by stealth, to force presents upon him, and, while kissing his hand, contrived to insert some coins beneath the mattress of the diwan. The biographer relates, with naïve simplicity, the astonishment of the good bishop when the matting was raised, and a whole shower of gold or silver pieces poured down upon the floor. They did not, however, remain there long, but were quickly transferred to the numerous poor families who waited about the episcopal portals, many of whom were supported by the benevolence of Bar Hebræus. Sometimes, however, the accumulated store amounted to so large an amount as to cause the bishop no small anxiety respecting the future disposal of it.

The affairs of the Jacobite community since the death of Bar Hebræus have generally been in a declining state. A long series of patriarchs might, indeed, be enumerated; yet the account of their actions could afford little interest, as it would be little more than a list of ordinations and of disputes, which rarely yield the reader either entertainment or edification. About the seventeenth century, the efforts of the Roman missionaries induced many to ally themselves to a new community, which was entitled the Syrian Catholic Church, and which has been steadily on the increase ever since. By the aid of the French political agents, the Syrian Catholics obtained many of the churches, and carried on an active system of proselytism, which was not always contented to rely exclusively on the force of argument for success. The Jacobites affirm that much fraud and cruelty were resorted to for the purpose of bringing over persons to the new church, and I once saw a manuscript history in Arabic, which charged the adherents of Rome with many acts of violence.

The Syrian Catholics, however, are not much altered, as far as externals are concerned, from their heretical brethren. Their priests are still allowed to marry and to use the Syriac language in the divine service; while their liturgies and offices have undergone a few trifling emendations. They have consented to receive the Council of Chalcedon, to admit its canons as a rule of faith, and, what is perhaps of more importance in the eyes of their Italian instructors, to acknowledge the supremacy of the Roman pontiff. A Syrian Catholic prelate, however, still resides at Antioch, who claims the title of Patriarch of the East.

Besides the divisions above alluded to, it is said that a

large body of the Jacobite Syrians are desirous of effecting some reformation in the usages of their church. They generally, however, adhere with considerable pertinacity to their peculiar dogma of the one nature, and entertain the most decided aversion towards any change in this particular. The Jacobites on the coast of India, who are generally known by the title of Malabar Syrians, receive their bishop from the Patriarch of Mardin; but it is said that, owing to the dissensions which have arisen among them, their numbers are rapidly decreasing. The agents of the Church Missionary Society have, I believe, induced many to join the Church of England, while others have gone over to the Romish Syrians, so that it is not improbable that the Indo-Jacobites may soon become entirely extinct.

With the exception, perhaps, of the Armenians, who are also distracted by many divisions, there seem to be strong symptoms of decay visible in all the Christian systems of the East. They appear to have lasted the appointed time, and to be rapidly declining in number. Perhaps the next fifty years may render the names even of the Jacobites and Nestorians a matter of history; while the descendants of those who now bear them will be found ranged under the banners of other communions.*

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Departure from Mosul. Halt of a caravan. Giorgio. Sinjar, and its ancient associations. Ruins of Dara. The Delli Ali. False alarm. Mode of escaping from Arabs.

THE period of my residence at Mosul was now fast drawing to a close, and I had before me the daily anticipation of leaving a place to which, notwithstanding the many disadvantages attendant on a European's life in the East, I still look back with no small amount of regret. The freedom of social intercourse, the simple manners, and the unaffected

* For a concise view of the different Christian sects of the East, the reader may consult with profit a small pamphlet, entitled "The Eastern Churches," published by Mr. Darling, of Queen Street.

goodness of heart which distinguish many individuals among the Orientals, display themselves to advantage when one considers the artificial polish and hollowness of what is termed civilized life. Yet it cannot be denied that a person of cultivated mind would often recall, at certain seasons, the charms of a more educated, social circle than he could encounter on the banks of the Tigris. Nor can the magnificent associations, or the splendid traditions of the East supply the place of a home, or dispel entirely the feeling of loneliness with which a stranger surveys the foreign crowd around him. I can hardly tell, therefore, whether, speaking with regard only to mere personal feelings, I felt more pleased or grieved at leaving a place which, according to the tales of its inhabitants, formed anciently a part of Paradise.

When the day of departure arrived, there were many, who had grown from mere acquaintances into old friends, to take leave of—with almost the certainty that we should never meet again. This was, of course, far from agreeable, nor is the recollection of it less unwelcome; wherefore I must beg the reader to suppose the last words of farewell spoken, and ourselves outside the gate of Mosul. We intended to take the shortest road over the plains of Sinjar to Nisibis, and from thence to travel by way of Diarbekir, across the flat country of Mesopotamia, to Aleppo.

As the road by the desert was considered unsafe, we obtained from the executive of Mosul a cortège of Albanians, who were to escort us till we had placed ourselves beyond the reach of danger. We had no Tatar with us, but hired horses to Aleppo from a native of Mosul, and, as soon as our intention became known, several merchants, who were traveling the same way, expressed their wish to join us, so that, by the time we had proceeded for three hours on our way, our numbers had swelled into a tolerable caravan.

After a ride of fifteen miles, we reached a small Arab village called Ak Meidat; but, as the mud huts did not seem very inviting, we pitched our tent, and prepared to spend the night under its shadow. By this time, a large number of persons from Mosul had joined our party, and, as they had also brought tents with them, the plain soon presented the animated appearance of a military encampment. Numerous fires, kindled in different parts of the heath, lit up the whole

scene, and displayed to advantage the variously dressed figures which surrounded them.

Near one of these were assembled our Albanian escort, whose richly-laced jackets and buskins sparkled brightly in the glare of the flame, which lent additional lustre also to their sabres and ornamented pistol butts. Having few of the scruples entertained by ordinary Mohammedans, they had brought with them some wine-skins, by the aid of which they proposed to beguile the drowsy hours of the night.

A group of sober, staid Moslems, not far from them, regarded with looks, in which dislike was mingled with fear, the unlawful proceedings of those whom in confidence they would doubtless have stigmatized as semi-Kafirs and Ferasoon.* They themselves were imbibing the more sober beverage of coffee, and smoking their chibouques, speaking little, but appearing to be engaged in profound meditation over their pipes. Others were busy in preparing their provisions for a night repast, while some were attending to their steeds, and getting their baggage ready for the next day's march.

As the evening drew on, a band of musicians, who had arrived from Mosul, began to play in the midst of the encampment, while three of the Albanians danced the Romaika with great spirit. The attitudes of this celebrated dance struck me as awkward and inelegant; but there was a wild savage air about it which agreed tolerably with the appearance and apparel of the performers. An old man with a cracked voice began to sing a very nasal ditty about the chains and torments of love; but the sentiments, however naturally poetical they might be in the abstract, derived little embellishment from the manner in which they were set forth. A musical Albanian nearly excited a quarrel, in his attempt to possess himself of one of the singer's guitars, but a few paras arranged matters, and he was allowed the loan of the instrument. He seated himself on the grass, with a circle of his companions around him, and with a fearful grimace, which was evidently an attempt to look interesting and sentimental, he shouted forth a ditty, the refrain of which greatly resembled

* The term Ferasoon, which, I believe, is a corruption of "Freemason," is used in the East to express a person void of religion. It is frequently applied to Protestants, and to Englishmen, concerning whose theological tenets the utmost ignorance prevails in the East.

in sound the syllables bow wow. I was told, however, that it was a very romantic lament, poured forth by a despairing swain to some iron-hearted beauty, who was eventually so overcome by it that she bestowed on the singer her hand and heart. The rude mercenaries seemed much affected by it, perhaps because it reminded them of their distant mountain-land.

We were accompanied from Mosul by a Greek servant, who had, for the last three or four years, been residing with Mr. Rassam. Giorgio, in that time, had grown somewhat tired of "the barbarians," as his ancestors would have called them, and as he thought them in his inmost soul. In theological matters, however, his liberality might have edified those enlightened persons in the nineteenth century who make it a point of conscience to commend and speak well of every form of religion except their own. On great festivals, he was always to be seen holding a very large candle in the Chaldean and Syrian processions. Like a true Greek, however, he maintained the superiority of the Melchite Church to all other communions, and considered the Pope of Rome as unworthy to bear the slippers of the Patriarch of Constantinople. But Giorgio's chief delight was to talk of the exploits of his father in the Greek war, where he had been a very Achilles to the infidels. At first, indeed, I could hardly understand these narratives, which he poured into my very willing ears as we rode side by side over some dull, uninteresting level, but at length I managed to pick up some words of Italian, by the aid of which, and a shrewd guess now and then at the meaning of a modern Greek phrase, we contrived to get on very well together.

Giorgio told me his father was a respectable farmer in Attica, who, after his belligerent doings, had taken a second spouse, a comely widow from Scio; but she proved such an ill stepmother, that the son, who inherited all the paternal spirit, was glad to quit his father's house, and go off to Constantinople. In the metropolis, he engaged in the service of some Franks; but rarely stayed very long in one place, for, like Ulysses, he was fond of seeing the world. After many misadventures, he entered the employ of Mr. Rassam, with whom he had traveled for some months in Asia Minor; and eventually accompanied him to Mosul. During his wandering and adventurous life, he had picked up many accom-

plishments—which were both useful and ornamental. He was a very good cook, a tolerable groom; he could make and mend clothes, play and sing a little, and dance the Romaika. He spoke Greek, Turkish, Italian, and broken English. Few better understood how to deal with the true believers, whose dignity he astonished sometimes by a lash from his whip. Perhaps no one could be more suited for our purpose, and all of us agreed, when the journey was over, that we had derived more assistance from Giorgio than we should have gained from twenty Tatars.

But the dawn is now breaking, and the whole encampment are rousing themselves from the slumbers which succeeded their revelry. The baggage horses have been laden, the tents struck, and the whole of the cavalcade is once more *en route*. A red glow illuminates the distant summits of the Kurdish Mountains and of Jebel Makloub. Behind us are the minarets of Mosul; while around, on every side, extend the plains of Sinjar, terminated to the eastward by the Tigris.

Near Ak Meidat, we crossed a stone bridge with two arches, built over a rivulet whose brackish waters are said to produce great numbers of fish. Under one of these arches, we noticed a trap or net set for catching crabs, with which the stream abounded.

In two hours and a half, we arrived at Hegnah, a small tell or mound surmounted by a ruined castle, on the gate of which was an inscription in Arabic, stating that it had been rebuilt in the year of the Hegira 1212. We halted for the day at the foot of the tell, near which was a pool of brackish water, plentifully stocked with frogs. Several of these unpleasant reptiles crawled into our tent, where they sat for some minutes staring at the strangers, and then disappeared to join their comrades in a croaking chorus, which interrupted my intended mid-day siesta.

From Hegnah we rode on to Aiwainat, another mound situated at the edge of a large plain, which presented a very gay appearance, being covered with the tents of the soldiers, who had gone forth to meet and welcome the new pasha. Report seemed to augur favorably of his character. Although not exactly one of the reforming school, it was said that Shereef Pasha was a man of humane and merciful disposition, strictly just and upright in his dealings; in short, a very fair specimen of an Osmanli ruler.

There were several troops of irregulars who accompanied the Nizam Djedeed, and I could not help contrasting their gay and showy exteriors with the wretched Frank uniforms of the new regiments, who seemed to feel themselves shackled and fettered by their jackets and pantaloons. They none of them wore any stockings; and those who were not actually on duty wandered about in a loose unbuttoned state, which might be comfortable, but which did not exactly respond to our ideas of propriety. The poor fellows seemed to feel themselves in a most uneasy situation, and evidently were at a loss how to manage their new clothes.

On one occasion, I met at the table of Mr. Rassam the Kaimakam of Mosul, a stout swarthy Kurd, who, as a government official, had been doomed to submit to the rigors of the Frank costume. When he sat down to dinner, however, old habits suddenly assumed the predominance; with much difficulty, he stripped up his sleeves as far as the elbow, and began to demolish the eatables with his fingers. The poor man, however, appeared so stiff and uncomfortable that I could not help wishing him safely returned to his jibba and zeboon.

From Aiwanat we had a long and tedious ride of twelve hours to Rumaleh. The roads were very muddy, as rain had fallen on the preceding day. The latter part of the march also was in darkness, and the sudden sinking of our horses, every now and then, in some bog or quagmire was the reverse of agreeable.

The nature of the surrounding country was little adapted to relieve the tedium of a caravan march. The flats were indeed varied by slight excrescences here and there, and sometimes by mounds of a larger size; but there was little to attract attention or to call off the mind from the dull monotonous tramp of the hired horses. I longed for a gallop, but our steeds were not accustomed to quick movements, and, as we had a long journey before us, it was necessary to husband their strength. When we arrived at Rumaleh, I felt quite exhausted, and, hastily dismounting, I wrapped my cloak round me, and fell asleep on the grass.

The next morning we pitched our tent at the foot of a small eminence, and determined to await the arrival of the pasha, who was expected to reach Rumaleh at nine o'clock A. M. Before he came, however, the Diwan Effendi, whom we found

also at Rumaleh, sent to borrow a bottle of brandy, as he felt slightly indisposed. The bottle was sent, and returned the next morning empty; but I believe the invalid made B—— some small present as an acknowledgment of the kindness.

Drums and trumpets sounded merrily as the pasha approached the tell with his escort. The whole plain was covered with horsemen galloping to and fro, and discharging their firearms in the air. Shouts and acclamations resounded on all sides, as the pasha dismounted, and entered the tent which had been prepared for his reception. Soon after his arrival, B—— and I went to drink coffee with him, and were much pleased with the politeness and affability of his manners. Yet the appearance of an Eastern ruler is sometimes deceptive in the extreme. I once went, at Constantinople, to visit a chieftain whose name has been associated with many a deed of blood and crime. We found a venerable man with a long snowy beard, which gave him a most paternal and patriarchal aspect. Nothing could be milder, more pious, or more resigned than his conversation. He described himself as the victim of undeserved calumny and persecution, and spoke of his enemies with the calm forgiveness with which a good man regards those who have injured him. His devout resignation to the will of Heaven was most edifying, and few that looked upon that venerable countenance, or watched the repose of that aged eye, could believe that there had been a time when both were lit up by the fiercest passions which can agitate the bosom of man.

From Rumaleh we proceeded to Aznaoor, a Kurdish village in the territory of Bedr Khan Bey, where we pitched our tents under the shade of some trees. From thence we rode on, in the evening, to Geri Zaina, a small village containing four families of Syrian Christians. It had formerly been a place of some size, but, like other towns and villages in these parts, was now reduced to a few miserable huts.

We had just been traversing the northern part of the plains of Shinar, on which, if the hypothesis advocated in a former chapter be correct, was situated the ancient Babel, mentioned in the early part of the Book of Genesis. The kingdom of Shinar is first spoken of in Genesis xiv., where an expedition is recorded, in which its monarch seems to have borne a considerable share. In company with Chedorlaomer King of

Elam, Arioch King of Ellasar, and Tidal King of Nations, he is described as making war against the kings or chiefs of Canaan. I am disposed to identify Ellasar with the modern Tell-Afer, mentioned by Mr. Layard as situated three hours' ride from Mosul.* Elam seems to imply the kingdom of Persia, while the Nations may have been different scattered tribes lately united under one head.

The races dwelling in northern Mesopotamia seem to have acquired, at an early period, the appellation of Chasdim, though some circumstances would lead us to imagine that it was not generally adopted till after the birth of Abraham. Their dominion extended to the Euphrates, if we admit the identity of Urfah with the ancient Ur. At the time of the expedition alluded to in Scripture, they seem to have advanced into the northern parts of Syria, as the Karnak Tablet mentions the Khita, a people whom Mr. Birch successfully identifies with the Chaldeans, as seated at Helbon, the modern Aleppo. A very current tradition prevalent in the East derives the appellation of Haleb, or Aleppo, which signifies "he milked," from the supposition that Abraham tarried here to milk his cows, while on his way to Palestine. He, therefore, most probably journeyed by the same route which a modern traveler would take, passing through Aleppo, and repairing thence by way of Hems to Damascus.

It remains an open question how far the chiefs of Shinar were independent of the power of Elam, as the people of Canaan are mentioned in Genesis as tributaries of the latter country. Yet it is not certain that Elam implies Persia, or, at least, the whole of it. It seems more to refer to the regions eastward of the Kurdish Mountains. Elam was the brother of Asshur, and, therefore, there appears to be a close connection between the Elamites and the early Assyrians, whose territories were probably contiguous. If so, this seems to bear strongly upon the fact of the northern position of Shinar, and corroborates the hypothesis respecting Babel.

During the captivity of the children of Israel in Egypt, the kings of that country appear to have come in collision with the Chaldeans of Shinar and the inhabitants of Central Asia. To this period I should feel disposed to refer the events recorded in the Karnak Tablet. A confederation seems to

* Nineveh and its Remains, vol. i. chap. ix.

have taken place among the Mesopotamian and Assyrian chiefs. The members of this alliance are given as follows:*

ARUTA [Ararah],
 AR-HENA [Iran],
 TEN-TEN-I [Tanais],
 KARAKMASHA [Carchemish],
 RUKA [Ragæ Media],
 KESH-KESH [Caucasus],
 CHIRUBU [Chalybes Aleppo].

We find here a number of nations mentioned, the general position of which corresponds remarkably with the localities alluded to in Genesis. The Aruta were the people inhabiting the vicinity of those mountains called, in modern times, *Jebel Judi*; and were, doubtless, the same as those whose monarch is alluded to in Scripture as the King of Shinar. We find, in the inscription, Ar-hena and Ruka, which agree with the Elam of Genesis, while the Scythians of Ten-ten-i and of Kesh-kesh may be represented by the Goyim, or nation of which Tidal is mentioned as the chief or sovereign.

The Tablet goes on to commemorate the exploits of the Egyptian sovereigns against these people of northern Naharaina (Mesopotamia). Rameses II. marches into their country, and subdues "the wretched chief of the Khita (Chaldeans) and the numerous bands that are with him, Arutu, the Maasu, the Shasu, the Kesh-kesh, the Ar-hena, the Katuata, with the Chirubu, the Ati, and the Ruka." Another expedition is then recorded against "the Ruten—northern lands behind the great sea." We find in this account the following list of captives:—

Khita (who are properly the Chasdim, or Chaldeans, which seems to have been, at an early period, a generic appellation for the inhabitants of northern Mesopotamia and Assyria).

Naharaina (Mesopotamia Proper).

Upper Ruten (Mr. Birch conjectures that these were the Cappadocians).

Lower Ruten. (Probably the Upper Ruten may have designated the mountaineers of the Taurus, and the Lower, the inhabitants of the plains at the foot of that range.)

Saen-Kara (Singara, or Sinjar), the Shinar of Genesis x.

* Observations on the Karnak Tablet, by Samuel Birch, Esq.

The northern position of Shinar seems here established, though, perhaps, in after ages, the same appellation might be applied to regions farther south.*

Mention is made also of the capture of a fort, or a fortified city, entitled Atesh, or Atet, which is described in the Tablet as "situated on a circular island, in the centre of a large river, flanked by two bridges." It lay close to the Ruten (Cappadocians) and the Luden (Lydians), and seems to have been in the vicinity of Saen Kara, or Sinjar. It was garrisoned by a Chaldean people, and was not distant from the Chaboras. Mr. Birch considers this Fort Haditha, on the east bank of the Euphrates; but, though I am sorry to differ from so eminent an authority on the subject of antiquities, I should, with all due submission, suggest, whether the insular position of the fort does not correspond remarkably with the site of the modern Jezirah, which is surrounded by two arms of the Tigris, and is close to Mesopotamia, Sinjar, and Cappadocia. Many other considerations concur in rendering this view probable. In the vicinity of Jezirah flows the modern Habor, or Khabour, which is nearly identical with the word Chaboras, or Khaboras, found in the Tablet.† The position of this insular town must have been in the heart of the regions occupied by the confederates—a circumstance which rendered its capture of signal importance to the Egyptians. Mention is made of the drugs of Atesh, or Atet, which might refer to the gall nuts still to be found in great quantities in the neighboring mountains.

From all these considerations, it seems probable that the Shinar of Genesis, and the Saen Kara of the Tablet, are identical, and that the Chasdim, or Chaldeans, occupied the plain of Sinjar, and the northern parts of Mesopotamia. Nor should I consider it unlikely that the numerous tells, or mounds, which I have lately described, might, if excavated, be found to conceal more ancient remains even than those discovered in the plains of Nineveh. There can be little doubt that they are not natural excrescences, but accumulations of rubbish, covered, in process of time, with verdure—a description, indeed, that will apply to most of the small mounds in the vicinity of Mosul. The future enterprise of some industrious investigator may yet bring to light more

* Observations on the Karnak Tablet.

† Ibid.

astonishing relics of the past than have hitherto been disclosed to the gaze of the curious ; and the ancient history of Central Asia may become as familiar to our minds as that of Greece and Rome.

From Geri Zaina we proceeded to Nisibin, where we pitched our tent near the mausoleum of Mar Yacoub. Soon after our arrival here, a band of wandering musicians made their appearance, and desired leave to exhibit their talents before us. The company consisted of four men and two boys, whom we had taken, at a distance, for females, from the nature of their attire. Their long black hair was braided, and adorned with strings of coins ; and they wore long red petticoats, which reached as far as the ankle, and were made like the under dresses of the Oriental women. They carried tambourines in their hands, which they beat from time to time during the dance. Their movements were the most ungraceful and unmeaning I ever witnessed, being nothing but a series of contortions, resembling the wriggling motion of a snake.

The men encouraged their exertions by the sound of their guitars, and the strains which one of the number poured forth showed more zeal than ability. As the music continued, however, the enthusiasm of the performers increased. The boys leaped wildly from side to side, their cheeks glowing to a degree that eclipsed the redness of the paint with which they were plastered. All the musicians joined in chorus, and produced, finally, yells of an awful and unearthly character. At last, wearied with their labors, they suddenly ceased, and, having received a small gratuity, departed to take a little repose. These people belonged to a tribe called the Delli Ali, a community which furnishes half the East with jugglers and mountebanks. They wander about from town to town, exhibiting their tricks, and sometimes perform in the houses of the respectable Mohammedans. I was informed that they were not celebrated for morality, and were generally reputed to be great thieves whenever opportunities occurred of stealing with safety.

About fifteen miles from Nisibis are the ruins of Dara, which are situated between Nisibin and Mardin, at the distance of nearly a mile and a half from the road. Being desirous of inspecting them, we left our companions to go on the direct route, while we turned aside to see Dara. At our

right was a low range of hills, which seem, in ancient times, to have been included under the appellation of Mount Masius, though the eminence which generally bears that name at present is farther to the north.

As we rode along, a Turkish aga and his two servants joined us. He had a residence and some landed property near Dara, and was what we should call a country gentleman. People of this class in Turkey very seldom mix themselves up in politics, or seek after official distinction. They remain at home in their paternal mansions, surrounded by their dependents, to whom they extend a rude but ungrudging hospitality, and by whom they are in general beloved and respected.

It is singular that in these parts one rarely finds a man of good descent among the governors. Most of the latter have risen from the dregs of the people, or are the offspring of slaves. Some can neither read nor write; nor does their ignorance seem, in any way, to affect their position. The agas form the sound portion of the Ottoman dominions; but their numbers are greatly diminishing, as their property becomes much depreciated in value by the tyranny of the pashas and mutsellims, who drive the poor people to despair by their exactions, and thus induce them to forsake their villages, and to abstain from cultivating the soil.

The aga we met appeared to be a sensible man, and better informed than most of his class. He had made several journeys to Constantinople; but he said he always returned with greater zest to his paternal domains. He admitted the tyranny of the pashas, and observed that oppression was, to use his own metaphor, eating up the land.

On arriving at Dara, we found the ruins situated on the slope of a hill, the summit of which was occupied by a few mud huts, inhabited chiefly by Armenian Christians, who possessed here a church and a priest. The remains were so extensive as to assume, at a distance, the appearance of a town; and we were particularly struck by the perfect condition of a tower, or minaret, which resembled very much the steeple and belfry of a church.

We pitched our tent at the foot of the hill, and, having taken some refreshment, went on an exploring expedition among the ruins. Not far from the site we occupied was a small rivulet, on the bank of which we discovered the remains

of an ancient wall. The stones were very massive, measuring at least twelve feet by eight. We began to examine the ruins which lay towards the north-east, and found several buildings in an imperfect state, one or two only of the rooms remaining. The walls abounded with inscriptions. We found about ten tanks of stone filled with water. Each tank was contained in a large apartment, covered by a roof, and having the light admitted through a square aperture. The well-joined masses of stonework excited our admiration, and accounted for the durability of these buildings.

In the opposite direction, we found the remains of several quarries, which had probably supplied the stone for the old city. We proceeded through two galleries, or passages, and examined the caves which were cut in the stony soil on each side. Many of these had been used as tombs, but were now inhabited by the peasantry and their families, who tilled the neighboring lands. We noticed several bas-reliefs over the entrances to these sepulchral grotts. One was the emblem of the cross, surrounded by a wreath of cypress; another, a collection of skulls and bones, over which winged figures were hovering. The borders of the arched semicircles over each aperture were richly carved in the form of wreaths. One of the cells contained a fine sarcophagus of marble, nearly half of which was buried in the earth. Another was shaped like a pyramid, and seemed to have been divided into various compartments.

We next descended a flight of fifty-six stairs, which conducted us to a subterranean hall, supported by pillars, still retaining the marks of the staples to which chains had been attached. Several passages were connected with this apartment, leading to the ruins of an ancient castle, of which this place had probably been the dungeon. A small, round opening in the roof let in a faint glimmer of light; but the obscurity was so great that we were obliged to bring torches with us.

After a lengthy examination of these remains, we returned to our tent, and were soon visited by a crowd of villagers, who were anxious to dispose of coins. They told us that, in turning over the ground, they often found "anteeka," a term learned from the Franks, and applied to every species of the relics of ancient days. Among those they showed us, were several coins of the Lower Empire of the Macedonians and

of the Parthians. Many were merely covered with Hittite inscriptions, without any figure. The peasants were willing to dispose of their discoveries at a very cheap rate, and, from what they said, it seemed that they would have little objection to the visit of some one who might make excavations on the site of Dara. From the general appearance of the place it appears likely to repay the exertions of some enterprising antiquarian, whose private means would enable him to commence operations without indulging the vain hope of assistance or reward from a government which will be too happy to reap the fruit of labors which have cost it nothing.

According to Zacharias of Malatia, Dara was fortified by the orders of the Emperor Anastasius, to serve as a frontier garrison against the Persians. Assemani, in quoting the above-mentioned writer, seems to infer that it was then founded for the first time; yet it is likely that his expressions refer to the construction of a new town from the ruins of an older city. In the year 573 of the Christian era, it was besieged by the Persians, under Chosroes, and again by the Arabs in A. D. 641. It was finally deserted and left to fall to decay towards the close of the eighth century.

We proceeded from the ruins to Mardin, a ride of about five hours, where we were kindly received by our old host Murad. He was still enjoying the sunshine of the governor's favor, though no one was more aware of its uncertain and precarious character.

We mounted with some difficulty to the citadel, which was situated on the top of the mountain, and commanded a magnificent prospect over the widely-extended plains of Mesopotamia. After visiting the pasha, we repaired to the quarters of the colonel of the Albanians to drink coffee. He received us in a small room lined with diwans: on the walls, we noticed several pairs of handcuffs, and some fetters suspended. The colonel was a liberal Mohammedan, and expressed a strong desire for a bottle of brandy, but did not succeed in obtaining his wish. He conducted us over the citadel, where we observed several pieces of cannon quietly rusting away.

At Mardin, we waited for the arrival of the caravan, which entered the town some hours after us.—Kas Botros and Michael had accompanied it, and complained very much of the conduct of the head man, who had tried to impose upon them.

As, however, he was much terrified at the prospect of a complaint to the pasha, he promised good behavior for the rest of the journey, and we allowed him another trial.

During our journey from Mardin to Diarbekir, we received the intelligence that a band of mounted robbers were in pursuit of us, and were lurking on the other side of a low range of hills which skirted the road to the right. This piece of information caused us to halt, and prepare for the onset of the marauders, as our horses would have been of little service in the event of a flight. Giorgio, who was in his element, took the command of the surrendereds and other attendants, by whose aid he constructed with the baggage a species of barricade, behind which we were to shelter ourselves and discharge our firearms.

The crisis was felt to be momentous. A fat merchant of Mosul crouched in agonies of terror behind a heap of saddlebags, while his trusty sabre, which he had displayed before with no small amount of ostentation, lay unsheathed beside him. One of our Christian servants was invoking the aid of the Virgin and Saints, while a black dependent observed that, if we were fated to have our throats cut, no efforts of ours could avert it. This assurance was not very satisfactory or consolatory; but we determined to do our best, and, loading our guns and pistols, we looked very determined and warlike behind our defences, while Giorgio, who volunteered to reconnoitre, mounted his horse and galloped up the hill before us.

We watched his movements with some anxiety, expecting, at each moment, to see the white smoke of the enemy's guns rising above the summit of the eminence. Giorgio galloped along the broad ridge of the hill, and then disappeared on the other side. After a quarter of an hour, we again discerned him riding leisurely towards us: he brought the intelligence that no robbers were in the neighborhood, and that all our warlike preparations were in vain.

This announcement reassured those of the party who had been looking forward with no slight tremor to the probable conflict. The stout merchant, in the heat of his enthusiasm, mounted his steed, and, flourishing his sabre, rode to the foot of the mountain, but was suddenly brought back by a shot which Giorgio fired in that direction. Those who had been

most terrified handled their sabres and pistols, and boasted of the feats of valor which they would have performed.

It seems strange to recall now the sensation which I experienced when news was brought that no attack was to take place; I confess I felt somewhat disappointed, although I am not fond of fighting, and would at any time, in the language of Shakspeare, "Walk rather with Sir Priest than Sir Knight." Yet there seems to be something stirring and exciting in the prospect of a fray, which kindles the warm blood in our veins, and makes us feel that, as far as the animal instinct is concerned, we are all lovers of strife. Philosophy may soften and religion tame these impulses; but they exist in the breast of every child of Adam, and are liable to be only too easily called into action.

On one occasion, two travelers were traversing a dangerous part of the wild country on the borders of Persia. One of them held tenets most averse to warlike proceedings of any kind, and averred that it was not lawful, even in self-defence, to take any measure which would endanger human life. The other endeavored to rebut his companion's arguments, and convince him of the futility of his reasoning; but he failed in producing any impression on his friend's mind. While they were engaged in conversation, one of the attendants who had been dispatched on before made his appearance, galloping hard, and breathless with haste and fear. He informed the travelers that eight mounted Kurds were advancing, who had fired at him as he rode on, and who were in fact close at his heels. The man of peace seemed somewhat disconcerted, but when the clattering of the Kurds' horses was heard, his hand stole towards his holsters, from which he extracted two well-polished pistols; and when the attack was made he signalized himself by the valor with which he joined in beating off the assailants.

We proceeded on our way in safety, and met with no further interruption from the sons of Ishmael, or the equally marauding Kurds. When we were in sight of Diarbekir, an individual of our party, who had hitherto maintained the most profound silence, gave me the following recipe for obtaining the protection of the Arabs, which for its originality I deem worthy of insertion here. "If you are at any time attacked by these sons of dogs," said my instructor, "do not resist, for, if you lift sword or gun against them, they

will slay you without mercy. Endeavor to touch them, and, if you succeed, you are safe; but, if you are unable to do this, spit at them."

"And get my throat cut to a certainty," continued I.

"No, on my head," he replied, "you may save your life; for, if anything that proceeds from you, even saliva, touches their person or clothes, it is as though you touched them, and you have then a sacred and imperative claim upon their hospitality. I am telling you no falsehood; for a brother of mine, who did this, escaped out of their hands, and is still living at Baghdad."

CHAPTER XXIX.

Diarbekir. Chaldean ladies. Mar Athanasius. Italian doctor. Remains.
Inscriptions. Holy fish.

THE approach to Diarbekir from the direction of Mosul presented some scenes which, though without pretensions to sublime beauty, possessed interest enough to attract the attention of a weary traveler. It was spring-time, and the flat plains were covered with verdure, while occasionally we crossed some winding rivulet, or, ascending the brow of a rocky eminence, obtained an extensive survey of the country around. The road we now took was different from that by which, on a former occasion, we had left Diarbekir, and presented more objects of interest to the eye. As we drew near the gate, our route lay between two rows of gardens, from whose blossoming flowers a sweet and agreeable odor diffused itself through the heated atmosphere.

We traversed, on entering, the best and least ruinous quarter of Diarbekir, which even seemed to improve on acquaintance. The houses on each side of us were built of black stone, resembling the material used in the construction of the wall; while they possessed the luxury of glass windows, which had lately been somewhat of a rarity in our eyes during our late sojourn in Mosul. In my own dwelling at the latter place, I had been obliged to fill up the apertures

ith oiled paper—which, however, answered the purpose for which I used it remarkably well.

We took up our quarters at the house of Khowajah Bidoush, a Chaldean merchant well known to Mr. Rassam, who received us with great kindness and hospitality. A large room, well carpeted, and filled with handsome diwans, was placed at our disposal, with two sleeping apartments for my friend and myself.

The next day after our arrival, we visited another Chaldean gentleman, whom we had seen before at Mosul, and were introduced to his wife and mother-in-law. The former was very youthful in her appearance, and seemed shy and timid; but her mother was extremely lively and talkative. Notwithstanding that most Eastern women seem to grow old prematurely, this lady did not appear much more than twenty-eight. Her manners were as polished and cultivated as any of her sex and station in Europe; nor did there seem any want of what some people call civilization, which, after all, is little better than a species of conventional hypocrisy. Both the ladies were richly attired, and wore a kind of round silver head-piece, bound round with folds of muslin. Their jackets were trimmed with gold lace, and rich shawls surrounded their waists. Their nails were stained with henna, a most odious custom in the eyes of a European, since it always seems as though the lady had just been digging up the ground with her fingers, and had retained about them some of the mould. Nor did the nose jewel appear a more appropriate ornament, though its antiquity pleads somewhat in its favor. I remember hearing, on one occasion, that a Frank was asked by some pasha or governor whether Europeans put rings in the noses of their women, to which the reply was, greatly to his excellency's astonishment without doubt, "No, but we sometimes insert them in the snouts of our pigs."

We visited the principal Chaldean church. It was comparatively new, having been built only ten years, through French aid and influence I believe, as the erection of Christian edifices is forbidden by Mohammedan law. There were four aisles, and a number of altars richly decorated. I noticed also a vast profusion of silver lamps, censers, and other utensils used in the Chaldean service, which were made of the most costly materials. The pictures had been broug

from Paris and Rome; but they were not distinguished by any particular merit in the execution.

From the church, we went to call upon Monsignore Pietro, the Chaldean Archbishop of Diarbekir, who no longer retains the title of patriarch. He was a good-looking man, about forty years of age, and had received his education at the Propaganda, where he remained for eleven years. He spoke Italian fluently, and possessed a very fair library for the East, which comprised some well-written manuscripts, relating exclusively to ecclesiastical matters. He seemed to approve of the Roman interference, as tending to improve and civilize the East.

We then repaired to the Armenians, who have also a handsome church in this place. We found them, as usual, ill acquainted with the English Church, and perpetually confounding us with the American Dissenters, of whom they expressed a hearty dislike. They said, "Why do these people come here to overturn our old churches and to alter our customs, which we have maintained since the days of the apostles? We do not deny them the title of Christian, nor do we wish to meddle with their way of serving God. It may do for them; but we prefer to hold by the ancient customs and the writings of the Holy Fathers. We do not send missionaries to America, though perhaps we may think they need them."

We saw at the Syrian church Mar Athanasius, a Jacobite prelate, who had spent eleven months in London and at Cambridge. He spoke in high terms of England and her church, and appeared to feel and appreciate the kindness which he had received from many of the English clergy, and particularly from the Bishop of London, whose name is known and respected by many of the Oriental Christians. I have often thought that the foundation of a scholarship, at one of our universities, for young Oriental Christians, would tend greatly to benefit these Eastern communities. A few young men, educated properly, and sent back to labor, without any sectarian end, for the good of their countrymen, and to diffuse among them secular and religious knowledge, might effect much for the East. It is painful, however, to be obliged to observe that many well-meaning persons have done much mischief to some of the Easterns who have visited this country, by making lions of them, and thus encouraging

habits of pride and self-conceit, which have marred considerably their after usefulness.

A friend of mine once received an invitation to a party where a Syrian prince was expected to be present. As he was well acquainted with the East, he was somewhat surprised at this announcement, and still more so when, on entering the room, he discovered in his Syrian highness an old retainer, who had frequently, in days of yore, polished his shoes and brushed his coat.

Bishop Athanasius, however, had not been spoiled by his visit to our shores. He had a frank open manner about him which was very pleasing, and he seemed really anxious to promote in every way the welfare of his countrymen. He informed us that the Christians were much oppressed in Diarbekir, as they were obliged to wear dresses of a particular color, and were forbidden to ride on horseback. We experienced the truth of his remarks as to the disesteem in which Christians were held, on our return to our quarters. Three or four Mussulman boys shouted after us "Kafir," and even threw a few stones; but we soon dispersed them by a few strokes from our riding-whips.

When we reached home, we found the Italian doctor of the quarantine department waiting for our return. He informed us that a cordon had been drawn round Diarbekir, but that we should no doubt be able to obtain permission to proceed on our way. We did so, in fact, and felt at the same time the folly of the whole affair, and the inconveniences of which it was no doubt productive to the poorer people. No one acquainted with Turkey could imagine for an instant that those who possessed money enough to bribe the officials would not be passed through immediately, even if they came from the most plague-stricken region; while the poor gardener or agriculturist, who depended on the city markets for subsistence, was excluded without mercy.

The doctor seemed very ignorant of medicine, though he professed to have studied it at an Italian university. Half of his brethren, however, in Turkey, might be numbered under the same category. These Sangrados certainly do as much as in them lies to diminish the number of the Sultan's subjects, in return for the money which they extract from Turkish pockets. With regard to the latter particular, however, our medical acquaintance complained that he rarely got his fees,

as his patients, though profuse in promises when they were sick, forgot them as soon as they became convalescent.

An Armenian dragoman, who accompanied the doctor, was exceedingly anxious to enter my service, as he complained that he could not get any pay from his present employer.

"Do you also practice physic?" I inquired.

"Sometimes, signore," replied this Oriental Gil Blas. "I have picked up some knowledge of medical treatment from my master's books, and from his performances. I seldom meddle, indeed, with the signori, as that would be improper and a rivalry with my most illustrious master; but I attend to the peasants and the humbler classer, who, poor people, are very grateful, and reward my services with rice, fruit, and sometimes a fowl."

"Do your patients ever die?" I inquired.

"But seldom, signore," replied the fellow, with a grin; "and, when they do, I assure you it is no fault of mine. I follow strictly the prescribed rules of the profession. Eccollo! here is my lancet!" drawing forth a rusty old blade, which might have pricked the veins of Methusaleh. "With this I have saved many lives. Your excellency seems of a full habit; would you make proof of my skill?"

"Grazia, no," I replied; "I never call in a medico except when obliged, and at present I do not require your assistance. But what else can you do?"

"What can I not do?" he answered. "I can speak eight languages, and write six. I can ride, attend to a horse, cook a dinner, and make European clothes. I am a most discreet person, and never betray secrets. I eat and sleep little, and never require much pay."

"Verily, you are a universal genius," I said; "but at present I have no occasion for such a treasure. Here are a few piastres to assist your medical studies."

The doctor rose to take leave, and his worthy assistant, with many bows and expressions of gratitude, speedily followed in his train.

In the afternoon, we went to pay our respects to the pasha, whom we found in an apartment of the citadel, which seemed to be used as an armory. His excellency was an Albanian by birth, and had risen from the ranks to his present station. He was very polite and obliging, making no difficulty whatever respecting our proposed infringement of the quarantine

laws. The pipes brought us were very superbly mounted, and were about six feet in length. On leaving the park, we rambled through the gardens of the Serail, which were tastefully laid out, and overlooked the Tigris. On the opposite bank were several coffee-houses, surrounded by gardens, under the trees of which we discerned several parties making kaff, while the strains of music issued from different parts. From the top of the citadel we had a good view of the town, and counted the minarets of eleven mosques, besides the domes of innumerable mesjids or chapels.

As we proceeded through the streets, we noticed several of the remains of the ancient Amida, some of which had been inserted in the walls of the modern houses. Here and there, the capital of a Doric column was used as a horse block; while a tablet, with a Greek inscription half erased, made its appearance under the sill of a modern Turkish window.

We visited a large building, or rather the remains of one, which still retains the name of Djameh El Kabeer, the great mosque, and was probably the cathedral of Christian Amida. The eastern and western walls were still in a tolerable state of preservation, while those to the north and south had been disfigured by Saracenic additions. The eastern wall had a large arched recess in the centre, which had probably formed originally the apse behind the altar where the bishop and his clergy usually sat. The northern wall was covered with Arabic inscriptions, and joined on to a mosque. The area of the Djameh was used as a market, and was covered with stalls. At the door of the mosque, we perceived the corpse of a man lying on a species of bier, upon whose breast was a wooden platter filled with the alms of the charitable passers-by, who contributed in this manner to the expenses of the funeral.

When we returned home, we found the Chaldean bishop, who spoke of some Latin and Greek inscriptions, which he advised us to see. He mentioned also several Greek or Genoese ruins among the hills in the vicinity. In the evening, our host, Khowajah Bidoush, came and sat with us; and, being a papal Chaldean, entered into a long argument with B—— respecting the supremacy of Rome, and the meaning of the text "Thou art Peter." The Khowajah contended *strongly* for the literal meaning, while B—— quoted the Fa-

thers, and endeavored to prove that they had given quite a different interpretation. To my surprise, our Chaldean friend repudiated the Fathers, talked loudly and long of the right of private judgment, and protested that he built his religion on the declarations of Scripture solely. The dispute struck me very much, as it displayed an anti-Romanist opposed in his turn by the "Bible-alone-principle;" though those who are so very strenuous for it might have differed considerably from the conclusion arrived at by Khowajah Bidoush. The right of private judgment, as it is understood by some writers in England, reminds one very much of Warburton's definition of orthodoxy:* it implies your own right to put what meaning you like on any passage of Scripture, and the erroneous impertinence of those who contradict you.

The next morning, we were obliged to make our peregrinations in the rain, and our umbrellas somewhat astonished the small fry of Diarbekir. We found a pool near the walls filled with holy fish, though I am not aware of the origin of their sanctity. They looked fat and comfortable, however, and were by no means timid, coming frequently to the surface of the pool to look at us, and to receive the morsels of bread which we threw in from time to time. They had indeed no cause for fear, as it was expressly forbidden, under severe penalties, to catch any of them, while the supplying them with food was regarded as highly meritorious.

We went round to the gates, where we found several Latin and Greek inscriptions, parts of which were, however, illegible. One of these recorded the virtues of the Emperors Valentinian, Valens, and Gratian, and their benefits conferred on the town. There were also several Kufic inscriptions, with several emblematical figures carved in bas-relief over the gates.

There are four gates to Diarbekir, Bab Mardin, Bab edj Djebal, Bab edj Djedeed, and Bab er Room, nearly all of which, together with the black walls, seem to owe their existence to the Romans, or rather to the Greeks of the Lower Empire. We strolled along the ramparts, and were much pleased by the view and the appearance of a very picturesque rock and waterfall between the fortifications and the river.

* "Orthodoxy," said that learned prelate, "is my doxy; heterodoxy, another man's."

As we were stopping outside the different gates to read the inscriptions, and to sketch the bas-reliefs which appeared upon them, we were frequently surrounded by crowds of idlers, who viewed our proceedings evidently with a mixture of curiosity and distrust. Whispered rumors as to our object began to be disseminated by two or three who assumed the air of being wiser than their fellows. "Those Franks are taking surveys of the country, and of the strong places, in order that their countrymen should know where to make their attacks," said one. "No such thing," observed another; "you know nothing about it, my friend. These people are cunning magicians, and have dealings with the djin. I saw one of their countrymen once take out a piece of paper, over which he held a small glass for a minute or so, and on my head the whole was consumed to ashes. They are drawing our city on their papers, which, when they get home, they will burn by means of these magic glasses, and the effect will be that our city will gradually fall to ruins." "No, no, my soul," remarked another; "this is too much. That people work in magic, and have dealings with the djin, is probable; but Stoffer Allah* to suppose that a man can burn paper with a glass; Kithub, it is a lie." The narrator had now to defend his own veracity, and this tended a little to distract public attention from our movements, a diversion for which we were not unthankful.

Returning home, we found the doctor and his faithful attendant, who again endeavored to fasten himself upon me even in the presence of his master. The latter seemed not indisposed to get rid of him, and, therefore, gave him a most excellent character, to which, however, I attached small credence. While we were talking, some one entered the room; and a voice said to B——, in English, "How do you do?" I looked up, and saw a good-looking young man of about five and twenty, who was dressed in the usual Turkish official costume, and announced himself as Ameen Effendi. He sat down on the sofa, and informed us that he had resided seven years in England, and had received his education in the London University; which he spoke of with great affection and admiration. He had also visited Paris, which he preferred to our own metropolis in point of elegance and gayety. It

* "May God forbid!"—an exclamation indicative of astonishment or horror.

was strange to hear a native of old Amida discoursing of modern scenes and cities in such a secluded place as this; nor did I think that his travels had improved Ameen Effendi. The doctor had taken his leave after he came in, but not before the graduate of Gower Street had pronounced a somewhat contemptuous opinion of his capabilities.

The next day, we bade adieu to our hospitable host, Khowajah Bidoush, who had treated us with the greatest kindness, though no doubt he looked upon us as sad heretics. As we rode through the streets, a few urchins hooted at the astounding spectacle of Christians on horseback; but they scampered off in great haste when they had received a few lessons of toleration from the lash of Giorgio's riding-whip. This excepted, we met with no annoyance or inconvenience in our ride to the gates; having passed which, we took a last farewell of Amida the black.

Fifteen miles from Diarbekir, we found a small Kurdish encampment, where we halted for the night. The tents were very large, and frequently divided into four or five compartments by means of screens manufactured with twigs, or, in some instances, by a low wall of loose stones. Within these Nomadic dwellings, men and women sat together on pieces of felt or hair-cloth, which formed rather hard diwans.

From the encampment, we rode on four hours to Kara Bagheeh, a small collection of huts, which were nearly all deserted by their former inhabitants. On asking the reason from the few survivors who still lingered in the places of their birth, we were answered in one emphatic word "Thulm."* During our ride, we had the Taurus at our back and to the right of the road. The heights were covered with snow, while around the most towering summits light hazy clouds floated, now hiding from view the crest of the mountain, and now, as it were, dissolving themselves, and presenting the appearance of waves in an aerial ocean.

Two hours ride from Kara Bagheeh brought us to Kai Mari, a small mound, at the base of which was flowing a small rivulet, around which were grouped the different members of our caravan that had started from Diarbekir before us. As they were sitting down to their evening meal, I could not help thinking that Oriental notions of liberty and

* Oppression.

were more truly practical than our own. The and his servant sat down together on the grass to eat of the pillaw which the latter had cooked; while a negro, whose society would have been universally shunned in the free and enlightened country of America, was seated in despotic Turkey next to a free white merchant in Mosul. The black was indeed a slave, and had always been one from his earliest boyhood; but he had been treated by his owner like a member of the family, and was now filling a post similar to that of a confidential clerk. He had been dispatched to Aleppo on a family mission of some delicacy, regarding his master's younger brother, over whom for the time being he was to exercise full authority. Our sable friend was well mounted on a fine stout hack; his dress was of good materials; nor did he seem a whit inferior to any one in the caravan.

A citizen of the American slave states would be astonished, if not scandalized, to hear that the Turkish bondman, be he black or white, possesses frequently greater facilities for rising in the world than those enjoyed by his free neighbor. He may become the friend, the counselor, and confidant of his master, and sometimes ends by being appointed his heir.

The white slaves not unfrequently obtain their freedom, and a wife from their master's family—though I have never heard that the latter has ever been the case with the blacks. Still the latter enjoy great personal freedom, are treated with kindness, and often amass property in their state of servitude. The master of the household is not, all things considered, more rigorous to his slave than towards his own sons. The latter are obliged equally to wait upon the family, to perform domestic tasks, and may not, without permission, sit in their father's presence. When they do amiss, their chastisement is rarely lighter than that inflicted on the slave. In short, if we could admit that the loss of personal freedom can be compensated by comfort and ease, we might consider the bondman of a wealthy Turkish merchant, or of an opulent bey, as occupying a station more likely to be productive of happiness than that of the free peasant or laborer, who is robbed of his just gains by the tyrannical exactions of an avaricious mutsellim or a grasping pasha.

From Kai Mari we proceeded to Severeck, leaving behind us our companions of the caravan, who journeyed more at

their leisure. Perhaps nothing can be more wearying, in Eastern traveling, than marching with one of these assemblages. Your utmost speed is three miles an hour, frequently less, and the monotonous walk of your dull post-horse, broken now and then by a stumble or by unwonted exertions to scramble over some fragments of rock which lie directly in the centre of your path, is by no means qualified to make the long hours pass pleasantly away. Wistfully and longingly the wearied and impatient traveler eyes the green plains at his side, and thinks how willingly he would take a gallop over them, even at the risk of missing the road or falling among thieves—two suppositions not very improbable in these parts.

But nothing can exceed the solid gravity with which a true Oriental supports these inconveniences. He sits in his high-peaked saddle just as he would sit on his diwan at home, and his solace—the never-failing pipe—accompanies him in a round leathern case which hangs by his water bottle near the pommel of his saddle. If the way is dreary, he yawns, and after two or three exclamations of Yallah, he draws from his girdle a match, if he be so fortunate as to possess that luxury, and, having filled his chibouque from the embroidered pouch which he carries in the bosom of his gown, he lights the tobacco, and then inhaling the smoke, not hurriedly, but in a measured and dignified manner, he thinks of the prophets and saints who have traversed the same weary route before him.

“Do you not find traveling in this manner very troublesome?” I inquired of a young merchant from Mosul, who accompanied us.

“It is fatiguing,” he replied; “but—praise be to God!—I have my pipe, and the recollection that our Father Ibraheem—on whom be peace and rest!—passed over these very plains in old days; and surely it is a great honor for an unworthy sinner like me to tread in the steps of so great a man.”

Our journey to Severek occupied seven hours and a half, over a road filled with bogs and quagmires. The constant recurrence of these in Eastern travel probably suggested some of the finest passages in the Psalms, where a comparison is frequently instituted between them and the troubles of life. Nothing can be more specious, or more safe, apparently, than the nature of the ground before you. You ride forward

in perfect security, when suddenly you are half blinded by two or three jets of mud, and find yourself floundering in the midst of a morass, sinking deeper and deeper at every plunge.

The town of Severeck is situated about thirty-six miles south of the Taurus, between Diarbekir and the Euphrates. It contains a population of 700 families, of whom 120 are Armenians, five or six Jews, and the rest Mohammedans. There is a mound in the centre of the town, on which we found the ruins of an ancient citadel. The bazaars were very wretched buildings, but the mosques and baths not unworthy a handsome town. Around in the outskirts, we saw several plantations of fruit-trees and vineyards, which latter belong exclusively to the Christians.

The day after our arrival being Sunday, we read over the morning service in the Armenian Church, which was kindly lent to us for that purpose, the Christians thinking, most likely, that it was better we should pray in our own way than not at all—a sentiment which some of their more civilized brethren would find some difficulty in agreeing to.

We went on from this place to Dashlik, a few huts placed at the foot of a mound, on the summit of which we found an ancient tomb without any inscription, but probably belonging to the period of the Lower Empire. The mountains of the Taurus were still discernible in the distance; and frequently when, amid the quagmires and morasses of the road, I looked upon their summits, lit up with the glories of a mid-day sun, I could not help being reminded of the hopeful confidence of a good man, who raises his thoughts from the troubles and calamities of life to those eternal regions of the blessed where the wandering and the weary shall be at peace for ever.

Eight hours' ride from Severeck brought us to a small village called Kara Djourma, where we found some families of Yezidees living in black tents. An altercation here ensued with the soldiers of our escort who had accompanied us from Severeck, and who were very anxious to persuade us to go on to Urfah by a longer and a more circuitous route than we had originally intended. By and by, however, the truth came out. Sufook, the celebrated chieftain of the Shammar tribe, was in the vicinity; and some of his Arabs having been plundered by the Governor of Severeck, he had sworn that he would plunder every caravan that passed that way. This was rather unpleasant news, particularly as Sufook was noted, on

such occasions, for keeping his word to the very letter ; and, having separated from our companions, we had only the courage of our guards to trust to, which was rather a questionable ground of confidence. We deemed it wiser, therefore, to put in practice the better part of valor, and incur the inconvenience of a lengthened route, rather than that of being stripped to the skin and compelled to walk barefooted to the next village ; so we followed the advice of Giorgio, who had formerly had a rencontre with St. Nicholas' clerks, which he related to me in nearly the following terms :—

“On one occasion, I was dispatched by the English consul at Mosul to bring a large sum from Baghdad to the latter place. I had also some money of my own to receive ; so I armed myself, and went down the Tigris on a raft, hoping in less than a fortnight to have accomplished my business and to have returned. When I arrived at Baghdad, I found that the consul's money had been forwarded to him ; but my own was waiting for me, and I took it and departed in peace. There was some talk of the Kurds or Arabs being about the road, and many advised me to wait for a caravan ; but I thought all these tales were invented by the cowardice of the Easterns, and that it would ill become me, who am a Greek, to listen to them. So I took with me a Turkish soldier, my gun, and a sabre, and departed. I had disposed of my money in the belt which I wore, and did not doubt that I should be able to escape both the Kurds and Arabs.

“For a day and a half we pursued our journey in safety, though my companion was very fearful, and was always telling me of the caravans that had been stopped near this place, and of the men who had lost their lives. But I bade him hold his tongue, and informed him that a Greek does not fear all the Kurds and Arabs in the world, seeing that they are all senseless animals, and barbarians who have no manners. But while I was telling him this, he uttered an exclamation, and said, ‘Oh, the Merciful One, the Kurds are upon us !’ Then he spurred his horse forward, and fled.

“I looked round and perceived three fellows on horseback with long spears, who were galloping after me, and who seemed to have no other companions with them. Then I thought, surely it is a shame to fly before these three ; so I waited till they came up ; when, in answer to their summons to deliver up my money, I fired my gun at the foremost,

NOTES FROM NINEVEH.

rolling on the sand. The other two then uttered a cry, when, Panagia! there came from behind one band a whole troop of these savages with their long spears. One of them, who, when they saw their comrade down, made at me with the most determined fury. Now, I am a poor weak man, and unlike my countryman Achilles, who, they say, encountered a host with his single arm; so I turned my horse's head, and followed the Turk as hard as I could gallop. But my horse was no match for the steeds of the robbers, who came up with me and pierced my back with three spears in succession, whereupon I fell to the ground bleeding and motionless.

They thought I was dead, and immediately began to strip me. They took every article of clothing, and when I came to my senses, I found myself lying on the sand, with only three wounds, and three or four wounds, the smarting of which caused me intolerable pain. My horse was gone; wherefore, having bound up my wounds in the best way I could, I managed to walk to the next village, about ten miles, with a burning sun beating fiercely on my head and blistering my skin. I fainted several times before I got to the village, and, had I been an Eastern, my bones might, to this day, have been bleaching in that sandy plain; but—praise be to God!—I am a Greek; and so I overcame all these difficulties, and reached the village in safety, where they treated me with great kindness (for they were Christians) and tended my wounds. When I recovered, I contrived to hire a horse and return to Mosul, where I found the money from Baghdad had arrived safely."

By the time Giorgio had finished his story, we came to a scene which recalled the ancient days of patriarchal simplicity. In an undulating plain, surrounded by low downs, we saw several hundreds of sheep and goats feeding quietly, and extending themselves far and wide over the verdant area. In one part, a small flock of them were following their shepherd to a more promising piece of pasturage; he walked before them, and carried, in the bosom of his gown, a favorite young lamb. Through the green meadows flowed a small rivulet, to whose pure rippling stream a few goats or sheep wandered occasionally to quench their thirst. The chief shepherd, or master of the flock, was a venerable man, with

a long silvery beard, which descended as far as the girdle, reminding me forcibly of Abraham, or of one of the patriarchs.

Nothing could be more agreeable than our journey over these downs. The air blew cool and fresh from the distant mountains of the Taurus; the aspect of the country around was diversified by trees and shrubs, watered by small rivulets, which seemed to flow in the direction of the Euphrates. The sound of the sheep bells and the bleating of the flocks alone broke the silence of the wilderness, and relieved the tediousness of solitude. Pitching our tent on the borders of one of the rivulets, we passed a comfortable evening; and when night drew on, the serenity of the weather so far tempted me that I had my coverlet spread outside in the open air, where I gazed for some time on the cloudless Mesopotamian sky and the brilliant stars, and then fell asleep.

The next morning, we were on horseback at 3 A. M., and pursued our way over the downs to Kara Kupri, which we reached about 8 A. M. It was surrounded by trees, on several of which we perceived rags and strips of cloth and ribbon attached to the branches. These, we were informed, were votive offerings, made chiefly by the female peasantry, for the safety of some relative or friend who had gone a journey. An hour after leaving Kara Kupri, we came in sight of Urfah.

CHAPTER XXX.

Urfah. Mochdeseh Yeshua. A Bedouin. Syrian observances. Church of St. Thaddeus. Bir. Passage of the Euphrates. Aleppo. English merchants. An Austrian consul.

THE city of Urfah is built at the foot of a low range of chalk hills, part of the town being situated on the rising ground. It presents a very beautiful appearance from a distance, being almost embosomed in trees. Nor does the interior so much disappoint the eye as that of most Eastern towns; the streets are clean, and well supplied with water, as the city possesses numerous springs.

We took up our quarters at the house of a respectable Syrian, whose name was Yeshua, or Joshua, to which was

the honorific of mochedseeh, or pilgrim, a term used, by the Christians, as equivalent to the Mohammedan *hajjee*, which is applied to one who has visited Mecca. The appellation of mochedseeh is given, in like manner, to a person who has made the Eastern pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The worthy mochedseeh, however, scarcely answered the usual romantic conception and description of a Palmer from the Holy Land. He was a stout, sleepy-looking Syrian merchant, with very matter-of-fact habits and manners. He treated us, however, with great kindness and civility, though his demeanor to others was that of a man who knows he has a knife in his pocket.

In the house of Mochdesseh Yeshua, several married sons had taken up their abode with their wives. Although, according to Eastern opinions, settled in life, and emancipated from the shackles of youthful obedience, their behavior to their father presented a striking and agreeable contrast to the conduct of young men of their own age in more civilized countries. The old-fashioned notions of the Orientals do not tolerate that familiarity which every stripling, scarcely out of his teens, would think himself justified in using towards his parent in this our enlightened and educated land. An Eastern father would deem the correction of the rod needed by some of those lingerers between boyhood and manhood whose shrill piping tone and nauseous affectation of manly airs render their society so disagreeable to people of mature age.

The houses of Urfah are built of white stone, which materially improves their appearance, and they abound with windows; so that a walk through one of the streets does not, as in Mosul, present the eye with an interminable series of dead walls. Gardens abound in every direction, and the sides of the hills in the vicinity are covered with vineyards, owned by Christians, who make of the produce wine of most excellent quality. The town contains fifteen mosques, several Christian churches, and about forty thousand inhabitants, of which twenty thousand are Christians. The latter are made to pay all the taxes, as well their own as those of their Mohammedan fellow-citizens, and are subject to great insult and oppression.

A son of Mochdesseh Yeshua informed me that there were originally in the town a body of Moslems, whose functions seemed to have resembled those of our militia, and who

called themselves Yencheri, or Janizaries. When, however, the Constantinople Yencheri were broken up, these gentlemen deemed it prudent to retire into the obscurity of private life, from which, however, they now and then emerged, in order to worry and annoy the Christians. An unfortunate Syrian had been visited by them a few days before our arrival; they demanded spirits, and on his refusal to supply them, broke everything in his house. He appealed to the pasha, but in vain; the Yencheri were too powerful to be interfered with, and the poor Christian was obliged to sacrifice a large sum in order to get rid of his tormentors. There are also in Urfah thirty families of Jews, who have two synagogues, and share in the persecution which the Christians suffer from the Mohammedans. Here, as elsewhere, however, the poor Jews are treated worse than the Christians.

Soon after our arrival, we received visits from a Greek doctor, an Armenian banker, and a Syrian priest. The Greek had come all the way from Athens to explain practically the mysteries of Hippocrates to the Syrians of ancient Edessa, nor did he at all lament the lot which had fixed him in the midst of barbarians. He was well spoken of in the town, although he had a Frank practitioner to contend with, who was often admitted to the honor of feeling the pasha's pulse. The latter gentleman had not recommended civilization by his moral conduct, being, in fact, one of those numerous harpies who are so often found preying on the corpse of unfortunate Turkey. The Sultan would confer a great public benefit to his subjects, could he send these gentry back again to their respective countries, to which, however, their return would be anything but welcome.

The Armenian was fat, pursy, and important: a species of Christian Hebrew, with a good-humored, though somewhat dull, countenance. The Syrian priest had been sent on a mission from his bishop to invite us to visit their church and schools. Besides these, a visitor of a novel description came to pay his respects to us. He was a Bedouin Arab from the encampment of Sufook, and brought an invitation from that chieftain to B——, who returned an answer that he would visit the head of the Shammar the next day at Haran. The demeanor of this rugged son of the desert was as free and independent as though he had been Pasha of Urfah and all its dependencies. He looked complacently on his bare feet,

and pitied us for being obliged to submit to the slavery of wearing shoes and stockings.

"Who," he exclaimed, "is more truly free than the Arab, that has nothing to care for save his children and his married? Free from the oppression and the vices of the town, his tent requires no thought, for in a few minutes it is pitched, and in a short time it is removed. The dweller in cities is bound to one spot, for he cannot carry his house with him; but the Bedouin is to-day on the banks of the Euphrates and to-morrow beyond the Tigris. The Bedouin has no wants; he requires only a little rice and his haick. Whose steeds are like those of the Arab? They fly like the wind; and the lightning passes not with greater rapidity from one end of heaven to the other than the mare of the Bedouin."

When this encomiast of a savage life had taken his departure, we went forth to see the town. One of the most striking of the public buildings was the mosque of Ibraheem (the Patriarch Abraham), surnamed El Khalil, the friend, or companion of God. The Syrian writers all agree in considering Urfah the ancient Ur of the Chaldees, nor does the supposition seem improbable. I have already mentioned my reasons for supposing that the Chaldean race occupied at first the northern parts of Mesopotamia. The only argument against this hypothesis seems to be the position of Haran, which lies south-east of Urfah, and would seem, therefore, to be out of the Aleppo route. Yet the language of Scripture does not necessarily infer that Abraham proceeded thither on his way to Palestine, as he appears to have remained at Haran a considerable time. The hypothesis which places Ur in Susiana seems, however, utterly untenable, and is founded only on the assumption that Babel, the metropolis of Nimrod, was in the province afterwards called Chaldea, near the modern Baghdad. The ancient traditions all mention that Abraham was put into a furnace of fire at Ur by the command of the tyrannical Nimrod. If, however, the latter was the sovereign of northern Mesopotamia, there is nothing in that fact to render the identification of Urfah with Ur disputable. It is remarkable that a small eminence not far from this town still bears the appellation of Nimrod Tagh, or the mountain of Nimrod.

The mosque of Ibraheem el Khalil is delightfully situated in the midst of a plantation of trees, among which we dis-

cerned also a fine tank filled with large fish, who are regarded with great veneration, and are fed daily by a person appointed for that purpose. Near the tank were several stalls, where bread and cakes were sold to those who were desirous of fulfilling the meritorious task of supplying the necessities of the finny tribe. The fish seemed very happy and contented, and doubtless found the reputation of sanctity very convenient in many ways. I did not quarrel with the Moslem for their care of the fish, though I told some of them that attention to the wants of their poor fellow men would be in my estimation a better action; an opinion which did not excite much approval, and doubtless caused me to be regarded as a skeptical and heretical sort of person.

Near the mosque was a fine old tower, which had formerly been part of a Christian church when Edessa was famous for its academical reputation. I spent the day in rambling about, and in musing over ancient walls and remains that encountered me at every step. In the course of my walk, I proceeded through a very picturesque cemetery, up the side of the hill on which the citadel, a mere modern building, is constructed. Within the walls of the latter were two Corinthian pillars, which seemed anciently to have been surmounted by statues. Near the top of one, we were told, was a Chaldean inscription. On the side of another hill in the vicinity, I observed several sepulchral grotts and excavations, with some arches of Greek or Roman construction. Near the citadel was another reservoir of sacred fish.

We then proceeded to the Armenian church, an old building situated in the midst of a cemetery. It was filled with tawdry pictures of the day of judgment, in which, as elsewhere, devils with horns, long tails, and three-pronged forks figured very conspicuously. Among the paintings, however, was one of superior execution, representing the Blessed Virgin and the infant Saviour, which I was told had been executed by St. Thaddeus. From the Armenian church we repaired to the house of the Syrian bishop, who received us with great kindness. He mentioned that his community had succeeded in obtaining permission to erect a new church outside the ramparts of the city, which was rather an innovation on Moslem law and practice. We then went to inspect the Syrian schools, which we found in excellent condition, though they complained sadly of want of books, a

frequent want in a country where there are scarcely any printing presses, and where the labor and expense of transcription forbid the multiplication of copies of even the most elementary works.

From the Syrian church we repaired to the Serai, in order to wait upon the pasha, a most inane-looking personage, with two projecting teeth like the tusks of a wild boar. His excellency asked whether England was contiguous to India, and whether we intended returning home by land.

The next day I felt too unwell to accompany B——, who repaired, according to agreement, to pay the promised visit to Sufook. He took with him a tinselled dress as an offering to the Arab chief, who, in return for this civility, presented him with a fine young Arab horse. B—— then visited Haran, of which he reported that a few old walls were the only remains. Giorgio had also his tale to tell, for, having in a fit of curiosity mounted a camel, the beast set off with him, *volens volens*, into the desert, and was stopped with great difficulty.

The next day being Sunday, and the Feast of Pentecost, or Whit Sunday, I accompanied our host and his son to the Syrian church. It was handsomely decorated for the occasion, and, as the service commenced before daybreak, the silver lamps were all lighted, which produced a fine effect, and corresponded well with the rich robes of the bishop and numerous officiating priests and deacons. Before prayers began, the clergy marched in procession round the church, sprinkling the congregation with boughs dipped in water, which ceremony they repeated three times. Some prayers and lessons followed, after which the bishop and priests lay down before the altar in the attitude of persons about to sleep. All of a sudden they started up, and began tapping each other on the back. While I was marveling what this could mean, all the congregation imitated their example, upon which I turned round and asked my companion the reason. He whispered that, on the morning of Whit Sunday, the apostles, having waited all night for the descent of the Holy Ghost, became towards morning very drowsy, and adopted this means of keeping one another awake. This practice, he added, was in commemoration of it.

After the tapping was over, the service proceeded as usual, and on its termination, I went to pay the compliments of the

feast to the bishop and his priests, who were good enough to invite me to breakfast.

On Monday morning, B—— and I resumed our peregrinations, and visited a celebrated well, about half an hour's walk from the town, which was called Beer Aiyoub, the Well of Job. In this well, it is said, was thrown the miraculous picture, which our Saviour sent to King Agbarus. We descended eight steps into a subterranean cave, where, we were told, Job resided during his affliction. From the Well of Job we repaired to the Armenian Church of SS. Thaddeus and Ephraim Syrus. The church itself contained little worthy of notice, though the date of its erection was the third century. We descended nine steps into a stone crypt beneath, where we were shown the tombs of the two saints, with some other monuments.

After some conversation with the Armenian clergy, we visited the ancient quarries, which seemed to have been very extensive, and abounded with sepulchral excavations. Near at hand was a building called the Ziarah of Sheikh Makhoud, which our guides very much wished us to see. Being, however, unable to make any one hear, one of the khawasses with us adopted the novel expedient of firing his pistol into the keyhole. The attempt, however, did not succeed, and we were doomed to be disappointed of the promised sight.

From hence we walked round the gardens, enjoying their fresh and verdant appearance. We entered into conversation with an old Syrian, who offered us some fruit, and invited us to sit and rest ourselves under his trees. After a brief pause, we went on to the Piaret Suleiman, a pool inclosed by walls, in which the legend relates that St. Thaddeus baptized the King of Edessa. Bottles of this water are sent throughout all parts of the surrounding country, and are considered a certain specific against disease. The spring abounds in fish, which no person is allowed to touch.

In our way home, we passed along the banks of the Kara Kiouy, a small rivulet flowing through two high banks, connected by several bridges, nearly the whole of which had been newly erected. Following the course of the stream, we returned to the town, and past an almost endless succession of orchards and gardens. The environs of Urfah present some of the most pleasing views in this part of Mesopotamia,

and remind the traveler that he is already on the verge of that land of the plain and shrub.

When we reached home, we found one of the Christian inhabitants of the town, who had come in great affliction to ask the advice of our host under the following circumstances. His son, a boy of thirteen, had been sent out with a few piastres to bring something from the bazaar. As he was going thither, he encountered a troop of playfellows, who engaged him in some interesting game, which so engrossed his attention that he lost the money which his father had given him. Not knowing what excuse to make, and dreading the chastisement of his angry parents, he stood crying at the corner of the street. A Mohammedan, who was passing by, inquired the cause, and, having heard the boy's story, induced him to come to his house, promising to repair his loss. The child followed his new friend, and in the evening a message came to the almost distracted father that his son had embraced Islamism, and that he would see him no more. The terrified parent repaired to the dwelling of the Moslem; but the latter had prevailed upon the boy to refuse to return with his father, and, as he had already repeated the profession of faith, he could not, without periling his life, resume again the name of Christian. Nothing, however, could be done in the matter, as the pasha, though not a bigoted Moslem, feared the violence of the Yenchiri, and other of the Mohammedan faction, who declared that they would carry off the youth by violence from his father, even if he were now restored to him.

The next day we made preparations for our departure from Urfah; but our friends were unwilling that we should proceed without a parting mark of their hospitality. It was arranged that we were to accompany them to the premises connected with the church of Mar Ephraim, where they intended to dine, and make kaif, and the next morning bid us adieu. After accepting their invitation, we sent on our baggage under the charge of Giorgio, took a farewell ramble about ancient Edessa, and at four o'clock joined our friends near Mar Ephraim.

At sunset, we sat down, cross-legged, to an excellent dinner, *al fresco*, in company with our worthy host, the Greek doctor, and the stout Armenian banker, who seemed to be somewhat of an epicure. Then there were several priests

of the Armenian and Syrian communities, and the venerable Armenian bishop, who pronounced a long grace before and after meat.

As the evening drew on, the scene presented many attractions to the eye of one who, like myself, is fond of strange groups and curious combinations. A lover of the romantic would have remarked with pleasure the mild and chastened light which the rising moon cast on the fantastic arches, and irregular, though striking, buildings connected with the old church of St. Ephraim, above which appeared the summit of the Acropolis, with its two lone columns, that had witnessed so many stirring spectacles. Beyond was the town, with its masses of foliage, and the graceful dome of the Mosque of Ibraheem, recalling the memory of the patriarch pilgrim who left the city of his fathers to wander he knew not whither. On the side, the eye caught a glimpse of the low building which surrounded the pool where the first Christian monarch of Edessa received his initiation into that faith to which his descendants so faithfully adhered. It seemed almost a vision that flitted before the fancy when I strove to realize the fact that I was treading ground made memorable by such recollections, and surrounded by the living posterity of that old Chaldean race.

Nor should the latter be entirely passed over while I endeavor to recall the circumstances which attended my farewell to a place so remarkable. The worthy *mochdesseh* presses his good cheer upon us with all the fervor of Eastern hospitality till the tables are removed, and we sit in all the luxury of the *dolce far niente*, under the shade of the trees, inhaling the *chibouque* or *narguileh*, and drinking the juice of the genuine mocha berry from cups no larger than those usually appropriated to eggs in this country. The portly Armenian is expanding under the genial influence of Edessa wine ; the Greek is haranguing with all the loquacity of his nation ; and the good old bishop, with his venerable beard, smiles gently on our mirth, as if we were all his own spiritual children. By and by, the doctor volunteers the *Romaika*, and, choosing out a plat of grass illumined by the moon's rays, he goes through those ancient evolutions, greatly to the company's satisfaction and his own. A band of wandering minstrels have joined us, and, after a few cups of wine, they give vent to one of those strange nasal Oriental melodies that

one is about to pronounce frightful, when some pleasing notes suspend our condemnation, and leave us at a loss to determine whether we like them or not.

At length, the revelry is at an end, and the party remain buried in slumber till the first dawn of day summons the attendants to prepare for the march. A few words of farewell, an affectionate blessing from the bishop as we stoop to kiss his hand, and we are in our saddles taking our last glance at ancient Edessa, and its hospitable sons.

After a long and weary ride over low hills, whose white and chalky ridges presented an unpleasing contrast to the verdant plantations we had just quitted, we arrived at Chermelik, a village of cone-shaped huts, which is inhabited in the winter only by wandering Turcomans. In the spring and summer, they dwell in tents, and roam through the Mesopotamian plains to seek pasture for their numerous flocks. We took up our quarters in a deserted khan, opposite to which was a ruined mosque, in the interior of which we found the remains of the pulpit-steps, and the niche to show the direction of Mecca. In the neighborhood were several cisterns or tanks, excavated in the rocky soil, with steps to enable the drawers of water to descend.

The next day we journeyed eight hours to Bir or Bired-jeck, on the Euphrates, over low hills of limestone, the reflection from which proved intolerable after the sun had risen. The roads were very good, however, having been recently constructed by Hafiz Pasha, who also excavated a large tank which we passed on our journey. As we halted to take a little rest and refreshment, a man habited like a derwish approached us. He professed to be a serpent charmer, and drew one of the reptiles from beneath his cloak, which he compelled to go through sundry contortions, and finished by winding it round his neck, like a necklace.

At Bir, we passed the night in a plantation overlooking the river, on the opposite bank of which were the remains of a fort which the officers of the Euphrates Expedition had entitled Fort William, an appellation rather out of place in such a country, where one dislikes nothing so much as to be dragged back from the contemplation of antiquity by the recollection of modern doings. Not that I would, however, in the least degree undervalue the importance of the expe-

dition, or overlook the merits of the gallant officers engaged in it, though one cannot exactly view it in the same light as the *Anabasis*.

The next morning we crossed the Euphrates in a boat, which was certainly in keeping with the scenery, as it was undoubtedly a model of what had been used two thousand years ago, or more. With all my respect for antiquity, I must, however, admit that our progress was slow, and our vessel leaky, two circumstances which made us rather pleased when landed in safety on the other side.

In seven hours and a half, we reached the banks of the Sajoor, a tributary of the Euphrates, where we encamped for the night, and I experienced for the first time the distressing symptoms of fever and ague. Under our present circumstances, however, it was impossible to stop, and I was obliged to be content with the prospect of a speedy arrival at Aleppo.

In the morning, we crossed the Sajoor, and pitched our tent at the base of a small mound, near which we observed the ruins of a wall composed of stones, whose dimensions were truly gigantic. I continued very ill, and though Giorgio arranged my coverlet in the best manner he could on the back of the mule, and our pace was exceedingly slow, yet the motion of the animal, and the hot scorching rays of a Syrian sun, proved almost insupportable. We passed the night near the mound, and the next morning went on to a plantation called Ain Kailan, which we quitted in the afternoon, and soon came in sight of the citadel and minarets of Aleppo, a prospect which then afforded me more pleasure than the finest landscape in the world. It was some time, however, before we reached the city and arrived at the house of Nahum Azar, a Syrian merchant, with whom we were to take up our abode for a few days.

My first impression with regard to Aleppo was the exceeding neatness and cleanliness of the streets, as well as the lively appearance of the people, and the gay exteriors of the houses, so different from the sombre aspect of an Assyrian town. The dwelling of our entertainer was pleasantly situated, and in the centre of the well-paved court we were pleased to notice a marble fountain, whose refreshing streams relieved the heat of mid-day. The houses of Aleppo were

well built, and their arrangements displayed a higher and more refined taste than those of the towns we had left.

This city may almost be considered to have succeeded to Antioch as the capital of northern Syria, and possesses probably as much commerce as any large town of Asiatic Turkey. The bazaars almost reminded me of Constantinople; and the splendid and varied costumes recalled the scenes which had so powerfully impressed me at Smyrna. The inhabitants, both male and female, of Aleppo are a handsome race, if I might judge from those whom I saw abroad. Both natives and sojourners, however, are subject to a species of disease called the Aleppo button, the effects of which are said to be very disfiguring.

Aleppo possesses a fine citadel, situated on an eminence in the midst of the town. In it are preserved several arrows, bows, and other warlike instruments, said to be as old as the Crusades. This prospect from the ramparts was magnificent: the eye ranged far and wide to the east, over the fertile plains which intervene between the Euphrates and the capital of northern Syria, while to the west appeared the dim outlines of Mount Amanus, and the country around Antioch. Like Asia Minor, this part of Syria seems too fair a portion of the earth to remain in the hands of barbarians, whose tyranny and oppression rob the verdant hills and smiling valleys of their charms. Still the influence of one of the finest climates in the world has probably not been without some grateful influence on the mind of the enslaved Syrian. His spirits are as light and elastic as those of a Greek, and he has learned to dance in his fetters. Perhaps, indeed, he scarcely feels them gall him.

In the days of Maundrell, a large English factory was established in Aleppo, which possessed a monopoly of the trade to the East. This factory and its exclusive privileges have long ago disappeared; but a few English merchants still continue to carry on their commerce here. Times, however, are much changed since Maundrell resided at Aleppo as the representative of the English Church, and praised the diligence of his countrymen in attending daily on divine worship. The English residents are now left without chapel or chaplain, and scarcely ever have an opportunity of enjoying the public ordinances of religion.

It seems strange when we reflect that the English, who

pride themselves upon being one of the most pious nations in the world, should be infinitely behind every other in providing for the spiritual wants of those of their countrymen who reside abroad. One can scarcely find two Oriental families anywhere without a priest and a church; the Romanist has his chapels and clergy in every inhabited spot; and even Mohammedans and pagans rarely live long in any foreign land without raising a mosque or a temple for the services of religion. But when the English do provide such accommodations, they are generally of the meanest and most inexpensive description. Some garret or some cheap apartment on the second floor, situated, as a matter of course, in the filthiest and most remote corner of the town, is generally pointed out as the English chapel. Nor is it surprising that, under these circumstances, the natives of Great Britain should gain the credit of having no religion. The Italian friar, the Greek or Syrian priest who resides at Aleppo, sees a large body of our countrymen living without a church, a clergyman, or any outward manifestation of their religious faith, and he immediately comes to the same conclusion that every other reasoning being would, namely, that the Ingleez are *ferinasoon* or infidels.

Nor has this been the impression of foreign Christians only. It has been shared by Mohammedans and pagans. I have heard both, in different parts of the world, give our countrymen this character. Now, while these things are so, it would be surely better to alter and amend them than to indulge in the national cant about being misrepresented and calumniated. Are we to give men, two or three thousand miles off, whose ideas of our island are confused and contradictory, credit for knowing what passes in England; and expect that they shall understand all about our religious and charitable societies? Their estimate of us must, and will be, formed by the conduct of the persons who come out from us, and this we cannot prevent.

It is somewhat ridiculous to hear a sensible man like Mr. Layard accusing the Romish missionaries of misrepresenting the English character. In the first place, what they say is not misrepresentation, according to their opportunities of judging; and secondly, it is, unfortunately, not the Romanists alone who entertain this opinion of us. Let Mr. Layard ask any sensible Mohammedan, any decent pagan, or any

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at Jew his sentiments respecting the English and their nation, and he will obtain the same reply in nearly the same terms. The Romish missionaries may have been guilty of exaggeration; this is probable enough; but I am certain I have too many grounds on which to found their remarks. Early, in the nineteenth century, it is time to discard the patched Pharisaical cant respecting Englishmen being so much more pious, moral, and religious than their neighbors. Besides the merchants of our nation settled at Aleppo, we find commercial men of all countries inhabiting this Syrian mart. One of these gentlemen, a Genoese, informed me that he had been fifteen years in the country, and he seemed proud of being able to add that he knew scarcely three words of the language. He spent his leisure hours—as most of his class do—in talking scandal, smoking cigars, and indulging in that common Italian luxury the *dolce far niente*. All the gentry of course despised the natives of the country most intensely, though probably most of them were their superiors in knowledge and even in education. Every one of the native merchants understood how to write and cipher, and the Franks knew no more.

One day, during my stay at Aleppo, I accompanied Khowajah Mansoor, a young merchant of Mosul, to make some purchases at a Frank warehouse near the citadel. The master of the establishment, a young Hebrew, informed me that he was the representative of the Austrian government, and gave an amusing account of his mode of keeping up his consular dignity.

"You see, signore," he remarked, "I am a man of business, as was my father before me, and therefore you must not feel surprised to behold me, at present, habited in a simple jacket and patched pantaloons. On state days, however, I resume the dignity which at present I feel is better laid aside. Could you see me when I visit the pasha, you would be astonished at the change. I hire four Janizaries, who, with a loud voice, clear the way before me for the passage of my mule. They are dressed, for that day only, in laced habiliments, of which I have a great quantity within. I array myself in a magnificent uniform, and all the people salute me as Khowajah Ibraheem. For the best part of the week, my mother attends to the warehouse, and I occupy myself in my studies. Do you ask what they are? I read

Arabic histories and geographies, and study the learned works of the Rabbins. I dabble occasionally in the occult sciences, and am well acquainted with astrology; mathematics are familiar to me, and I have gone several times through the problems of Euclid. I am now learning the Greek language, that I may enjoy the beauties of those incomparable writers who have enlightened the world. In religion, I hold liberal opinions, and am, therefore, well disposed towards the English nation. Should you, then, require my services, or feel disposed to visit my study, I shall be ravished at the honor of entertaining you."

To this speech I made a suitable reply, and expressed my surprise and delight at encountering, so unexpectedly, a man of so much learning. The consul then turned to my companion, and, after much haggling, sold him a penknife, which the latter found afterwards was worth about a quarter of the price he had paid for it. He tried also to have dealings with me, and expressed his readiness to cash any orders or bills of exchange at a moderate rate of interest. I found, however, that all his learning had left him a somewhat keen eye for the main chance, and thought it might be safer to refrain from all pecuniary transactions with a gentleman of such extensive knowledge.

While on a visit to Mr. Wherry, our hospitable consul, I made acquaintance with his dragoman, M. Michael Sola, who had been, I understood from him, in the employ of Lady Hester Stanhope. He gave me much information respecting that singular person, whose love for Syria and its mysterious associations are so well known. Her ladyship was, however, very rigid and exacting in her ways. She both loved and exercised power, and on one occasion had M. Sola shut up in prison for some whimsical reason. I asked him if she really possessed much influence with the natives on religious grounds. He replied that they neither understood nor gave any credence to her pretensions; but many of them found it profitable to carry her strange stories about astrology and magic, and to listen respectfully to the long orations in which she endeavored to enlighten them.

It is strange how, even after a short residence in the East, the love of that region, its habits, and its mysticism grows upon the mind. Many instances have come under my notice of persons who, from sojourners, have become residents, and

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little disposed to change their place of abode for a more civilized habitation. Is it an instinctive attraction, an inexorable longing for the early home of our race, or the influence of early implanted religious feeling, that draws us to the place where God has so frequently made Himself visible to us, and the footsteps of prophets and saints have consecrated the very soil?

CHAPTER XXXI.

Journey from Aleppo. Antioch. Latakia. Conclusion.

Not far from Aleppo is the town of Scanderoon, situated on the gulf of that name. It is the seaport of the former city, whence merchandise is exported to Europe and other parts, and is frequented by many vessels, though its unhealthiness is such that few persons can reside there for any length of time with impunity. Near this place, lived an Englishman who had embraced the creed of Islam, and was married to three Syrian ladies of the same faith. He was said to be an eccentric individual, and had erected a costly tomb over the remains of a favorite dog.

Aleppo seems to be the head quarters of the different Christian churches and sects prevalent in Syria. Maximus, the papal Patriarch of the Syrians, had his residence here. He received his education at Rome, and was considered a man of some ability. The Greek Melekites have a church at Aleppo, and a very fair congregation. We attended service there one Sunday, and could follow it tolerably, having acquired the Greek mode of pronunciation. Only certain parts of the Liturgy, however, were in the Greek language, as the Melekites use the Arabic in their ministrations. The church was not well fitted up, and, as usual, decorated with tawdry pictures. Nor could the chanting be considered agreeable to a European ear. At the end of the Liturgy, certain portions of consecrated bread were handed round, of which we partook. This is a remnant of the ancient Agapai, or love feasts, still retained in the Oriental churches. The Armenians and papal Syrians have two superb places of

worship, adorned with silver lamps and some well-executed paintings.

On the Monday, a female ballad singer came into the court, and, being known to the family, she sang several songs in Arabic, and made extempore verses on some of the company. She played off two or three practical jokes, which occasioned some amusement, especially when, approaching a very pompous individual, she requested permission to kiss his hand; but, on his holding it out for that purpose, gave him a sharp bite.

In the course of the afternoon, we paid a visit to a newly-married couple, and were introduced to the bride. She was a beautiful young woman, richly dressed, but very childish in her demeanor. Her husband was a wealthy merchant, and possessed a magnificent house, containing some spacious apartments and several handsome fountains. Nothing can equal the splendor in which the rich Aleppines live, though the city is not without its quota of poor hovels, inhabited by ragged and poverty-stricken natives.

The gardens of Aleppo are famed for their beauty, and the capabilities which they afford for kaif. We accompanied Nahum Azar to one of these parties, where the usual routine of smoking and story-telling went on for some hours. Two of the company were Melekite Greeks, who had resided some time in Italy. They possessed a tolerable library for the East, consisting chiefly of theological works.

We stayed for some days at Aleppo, to enable me to recover from my fever and ague, which still continued very troublesome. The usual treatment is to place the patient on a bed, and to heap upon him an innumerable quantity of coverings, which produce perspiration during the shivering stage of this disorder. While I was lying under a mountain of bed-clothes, the mother of Nahum Azar brought me a small phial of water which had been procured from the Holy Well at Edessa, and begged me to try it as a remedy. To please the good old lady, I swallowed the whole at a draught, but cannot speak positively as to its effects, as I had previously taken some common medicine, and certainly found myself better on the succeeding day. My recovery was ascribed, however, to the water by some of the family, though Nahum Azar shook his head suspiciously, and seemed to consider it a doubtful matter.

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g recovered sufficiently to resume my journey, we po, on the third of June, for Kefer Dail, a small vil- at fifteen miles distant. It was inhabited by Arabs, rded us very sorry accommodation. We took up rters on a ruined terrace, which had formerly belonged mansion of a bey. From Kefer Dail, we rode on five to Idana, a large village of Arab Mussulmen. Near latter place, were some extensive quarries, and excava- with sepulchral grots. We saw, also, the remains of a ch, consisting of a dome, supported on four columns. the right of the road, as we passed along, our attention s directed to a solitary mountain, supposed to be that reon St. Simeon Stylites passed his extraordinary exist- . He caused a pillar to be erected here, on the top of ich he remained for forty years, preaching sometimes, a his lofty position, to the neighboring peasants, and g counsel and admonition even to emperors. The base s column, we were told, may still be seen on the sum- of this mountain. It is strange to reflect on the well- ant perversion of religion which reduced a sincere believer the Gospel to the level of a Hindoo Yougee. Simeon, how- ever, doubtless, deemed he was doing God and man service, at the cost of his own comfort and ease. Acting upon such a persuasion, perhaps, his austerities rebuke the selfishness of some of our generation, who think themselves entitled to sneer at him, and who would not suffer the ache of a little finger either for the sake of God or their fellow man.

The sepulchral caves at Idana were arched recesses in the rock, about four feet high and three deep, containing each a stone sarcophagus. In the village, we found the ruins of a Greek church, the apse and dome, over the altar, remaining in a fair state of preservation. Columns, architraves, bases, and capitals were mixed up with reckless confusion, in the exteriors of the village houses. The ruins were resorted to by every one who wished to erect a new habitation, and will probably soon disappear from their present site. As we were examining these remains, many of the villagers pressed around us, watching, with great curiosity, our researches, and the notes which we wrote down from time to time. When we had ceased from our investigations, they asked if we were looking for gold, and whether there were really any treasures buried below. They seemed to consider our notes as forms

of incantation, by which we hoped to subdue, or propitiate, the genii guardians of the hidden riches.

From Idana, we journeyed four hours to Sou Bashi, a marshy place, near a muddy rivulet. As we rode along, we perceived numerous ruins of churches and monasteries covering the slopes and summits of the hills and mountains on every side. We were now in the vicinity of Antioch, which was celebrated in old times for the number of its monks, whose lauras, or monastic villages, lay scattered about the surrounding country.

Our journey from Sou Bashi to Jisr Hadeed, or the stone bridge, occupied four hours. This place takes its name from the bridge over the Orontes, which we crossed here. The village itself is on the eastern bank of the river, and contains some relics of antiquity, that have frequently aided in the construction of its mud cabins.

From Jisr Hadeed, we rode on for two hours, and spread our carpets, for the night, on the rising acclivities to the south of the road. The scene, at sunset, was magnificent. Before us were the dark mountains of the Amanus range, skirting an undulating and well-cultivated plain, through the midst of which flowed the Orontes, whose name recalled a multitude of historical associations. Much of the enjoyment, however, which I should otherwise have derived from this part of the journey was impeded by a return of the fever and ague, that I deemed had been perfectly cured at Aleppo.

From our last halting-place we pushed on to Antioch, pursuing our route along the base of the hills, at the foot of which we had rested the night before. At the distance of a mile from the town, we encountered a number of gardens, which lay on each side of the road, and seemed to be well tended by their owners. We entered Antioch by the gate of St. Paul, and were much struck by the mean appearance which it presented. Most of the houses were covered with red tiles, and were constructed without taste or elegance. Everything looked miserable and wretched, while the beautiful scenery around seemed perfectly thrown away on the modern Antioch. The town appeared almost deserted, and its streets were so still and silent that one might have imagined it to be the resuscitated form of the ancient city, raised, like Pompeii, from a sleep of centuries, and abandoned by all living beings except a few travelers or sight-seers. Much of its present desolate aspect, however, was occasioned by the

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thquake which took place here a few years ago, and many of the surviving inhabitants to repair to

took up our quarters at the house of a man whose name had been the English agent; but our reception was not so hospitable. He complained that our government had not recognized him as their representative, and, therefore, travelers of our nation had no right to expect that it would afford them any assistance. The mutsellim, however, took a very different view of the matter, and ordered us to receive us, which, after a long delay, he did.

After dinner, we went abroad to discover if we could pick out any ancient remains; but in this we were perfectly unsuccessful. Everything around was modern, except the river and those glorious mountains which had once looked down upon the magnificent capital of the East.

We did not tarry long at Antioch, but continued our journey over the mountains, halting occasionally in the valleys, pitching our tent under the hospitable shades of the spreading walnut trees, which afforded a kindly shelter from the rays of a Syrian sun. The day after our departure, we toiled for half an hour up a steep and stony mountain

path, which conducted us to the summit of a lofty eminence, whence we beheld beneath the wide expanse of the beautiful Mediterranean, its numberless waves lit up by a thousand smiles. The sight excited powerfully our home feelings, and, to the great astonishment of our escort, we rose in our stirrups and saluted the sea with three loud cheers. Giorgio, who entered into our enthusiasm, remarked that it reminded him of the joy with which some of his countrymen had hailed a similar view in days of yore.

We continued our route, proceeding through avenues of trees, varied now and then by hedges of oleanders and bay myrtles, and crossing from time to time some rivulet or mountain stream, from whose clear waters we satisfied our horses' thirst and our own. At length we emerged from a mountain forest, and entered a large plain covered with verdure, at the extremity of which lay the town of Latakia, the ancient Laodicea, where we were hospitably received by the English consular agent, a Syrian Melekite.

We remained at Latakia two days, during which time we were honored by a visit from the Greek bishop and his priests.

The episcopal dignitary was a fine-looking man, and was treated with the most marked deference by his clergy, who, on entering the room where he sat, prostrated themselves before him, and did not presume to join in the conversation till he had given them permission.

From Latakia we hired an Arab boat to convey us to Beyrout, in which we embarked two days after our arrival, and sailed along the coast, having on our left the mountains of the Anusarey, who, like their neighbors the Druses, cultivate in their inaccessible retreats a mysterious and unknown worship. As we proceeded, we came in sight of the Lebanon range, its lofty summits being covered with monasteries and the castles of Druse and Maronite chieftains.

During the voyage, the sailors pointed out one of the former residences of the Emir Beschir, whom I had seen at Constantinople, a captive exile from his fair Syrian land. The emir possessed some of the qualities which have constituted in all ages a great man. He was brave, politic, and unscrupulous; cared very little about the feelings or the lives of those who opposed him, and deceived everybody who placed any reliance on his promises. Alternately a Christian, a Mohammedan, and a Druse, he seems to have been ready to assume any religion which enabled him to exercise sovereign power over the mountaineers. But the emir soon found himself in a dangerous and precarious position between Lord Palmerston and Ibraheem Pasha. The siege of Acre followed; and the head of the house of Shehaab was compelled to abandon his sceptre, and to retire to an honorable banishment at Stamboul.* The Holy Land was again delivered over to the tender mercies of the Osmanli, and their hated sway quickly restored it to its former desolate and unsafe state. During the government of Ibraheem Pasha, a traveler

* It is but justice to observe that the character I have here given of the Emir of Lebanon is not founded on personal knowledge, but is that generally bestowed on him by Franks in the East. Having, however, some misgivings respecting information collected from the latter source, I must remark that my worthy friend, Madame Asmar, the authoress of the entertaining and instructive "Memoirs of a Babylonian Princess," represents the Emir Beschir as a man of great piety and as a well-meaning and persecuted prince, who entertained the deepest penitence for measures to which he had been led by motives of state policy. Madame Asmar's intimate knowledge of the emir and his subjects claims for her statement some attention, and more credit perhaps than the *on dits* of ignorant and prejudiced travelers.

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from Dan to Beersheba with a single attendant, or, now, however, he can hardly stir six miles without an escort. These facts require no comment. But as well to mention that the natives very generally see these calamities at our door. It seems the invariable policy of England to interfere in all the quarrels of other nations, to bring our self-constituted allies into greater trouble than they were in before, and to be abused by the persons whom our rulers supposed they were assisting and loading with benefits. Lord Palmerston and his measures are decidedly in bad odor among the inhabitants of Palestine—as they are they not in foreign parts?

We arrived safely at Beyrout, and found ourselves once more the tenants of an indifferent hotel, which, though not comfortable, gave, perhaps, more scope to the feeling of independence than the Oriental hospitality we had for some time experienced. From hence I repaired, after a short stay in these parts, to Malta, by way of Smyrna, and continued my wanderings in the East.

And now, kind, gentle, or courteous reader—for under all these names you have been addressed by those who wish you to read their books—allow me to thank you for having accompanied me so far in the pilgrimage, whose details you have just been perusing. You have traversed with me some of the most interesting regions of the earth; and I would fain indulge the vanity of supposing that you have not grown weary of my company. Old traveler as I am, I feel some compunction at parting with you, since our present fire-side journey has served to recall many scenes and many friends who are now far away. In taking leave, therefore, let me conclude with the wish so prominent in Eastern farewells—“Ma Salaam, may you depart with peace as your constant companion!”

THE END.



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